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The Life  
of  
Joel Chandler Harris

*From Obscurity in Boyhood to Fame  
in Early Manhood*

WITH

Short Stories and Other Early Literary  
Work Not Heretofore  
Published in Book Form

By Robert Lemuel Wiggins, Ph.D.

*Professor of English in Birmingham-Southern College  
Birmingham, Ala.*



Nashville, Tenn.  
Dallas, Tex.; Richmond, Va.  
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## PREFACE

OPPORTUNITY to contribute to the knowledge of Joel Chandler Harris came to the author, a native of Georgia, while he was living in the city of Atlanta. "The Sign of the Wren's Nest" was thrown open to him by Mrs. Harris just as she began setting things in order for the approaching occupancy of the home by the Uncle Remus Memorial Association. She generously laid before him Mr. Harris's boyhood scrapbooks, an invaluable file of *The Countryman*, letters, pertinent clippings, etc., and through leisurely conversation from day to day afforded such illumination on the life and character of her husband as could come from no other source. Further researches were made in Eatonton, Forsyth, Savannah, and Atlanta, in each of which places were still living those who had known Harris in his boyhood or young manhood previous to the publication of "Uncle Remus" and were glad to give facts that might be got only from their memories. Especial mention must be made of Mrs. George Starke, whose reminiscences were strengthened by letters that she has permitted to be used. The most valuable documentary sources of information were the files of *The Countryman* and the *Atlanta Constitution*, which were diligently searched page by page, the former exhaustively and the latter from the year of Harris's first association with the paper down to 1881.

The author is under particular obligation to Professor W. P. Trent, of Columbia University, who read the manuscript of this work and gave scholarly advice. He is also indebted to Professor James Hinton, of Emory University, for kindly criticisms and suggestions. A portion of the work was submitted as a dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy at

the University of Virginia, where valuable assistance was received from Professor C. Alphonso Smith. The reproduction of "The Romance of Rockville" would have been impossible had not Miss Alice B. Wilson, of the Atlanta *Constitution*, personally made a typewritten copy from the carefully guarded file of the weekly *Constitution*. Permission for this to be done was generously granted by the editor, Mr. Clark Howell. The bibliography was prepared with comparative ease on account of the previous work of Misses Katherine Wooten and Tommie Dora Barker at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta. From the beginning to the close of his task extensive assistance, both in the mechanical work of preparing the manuscript and in literary criticism, has been given by the author's wife, Gertrude Holland, grateful acknowledgment of which is here made. The Index was prepared by the Book Editor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Dr. Frank M. Thomas. The volume is published in recognition of the value of Harris's contribution to our nation's literature. R. L. WIGGINS.

Birmingham, Ala.

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## INTRODUCTION

THE fame and popularity of Joel Chandler Harris followed instantly upon the publication of his first book, in 1880, and have steadily grown and spread until he has attained a permanent place in the world's literature. His ability and talent are evident in all that he wrote as poet, editor, historian, novelist, and short-story writer; but his genius triumphs in his negro folk tales, and these are carrying his name around the world.

"Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings" had been off the press only about two weeks when the publishers wrote:

*Dear Mr. Harris:* The firm are well pleased at the success of "Uncle Remus." We have sold two editions of fifteen hundred each, and the third edition of fifteen hundred more will be in on Friday. Of these, some five hundred are ordered. Mr. Charles A. Dana told me in my office last week as follows: "Derby, 'Uncle Remus' is a great book. It will not only have a large, but a permanent, an enduring sale."

Yours truly,

J. C. DERBY.<sup>1</sup>

In 1915 the publishers reported fifty-two printings of this book. "Nights with Uncle Remus" has passed through six editions. "Uncle Remus and His Friends" has appeared in editions of 1892, 1900, 1913, and 1914.

In England "Uncle Remus" was published very soon after

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. J. C. Derby, as representative of the publishers, went to Atlanta and assisted Mr. Harris in selecting from the files of the *Atlanta Constitution* those tales, sketches, songs, and proverbs that make up the volume.

it appeared in this country, and its popularity there has equaled its popularity here. Ten publishing houses in London have produced editions. Rudyard Kipling has expressed his admiration of Harris's work, acknowledging indebtedness to him from the age of fifteen, when "Uncle Remus" legends "ran like wildfire through an English public school."<sup>1</sup>

On April 24, 1914, W. Francis Aitken wrote: "So far as I can gather from memory and from others who should know, the Uncle Remus series is as well known in England almost as the 'Fables' of Æsop, but no one has written anything about him that stands out by reason of its intrinsic importance." *Punch* and *Westminster Gazette* have adapted the Uncle Remus idea to political caricature. A cablegram from London, published in the *Atlanta Journal* April 16, 1914, tells fully of "'Brer Rabbit and Mr. Fox,' which was presented for the first time on any stage at the Aldwych Theater to a delighted and astonished audience."<sup>2</sup> The *London Sunday Times* of May 3, 1914, indicates the equal success of the dramatization at the Little Theater.<sup>3</sup> The "Cambridge History of American Literature," now being published, allots a chapter to Harris.

In Germany, the culture ground of folklore study, we may presume that this author will be a growing figure. In 1910-11, as Roosevelt Professor in the University of Berlin, Dr. C. Alphonso Smith, presenting a survey of American literature, devoted two entire lectures out of thirty to "Joel

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<sup>1</sup>From a letter to Mr. Harris, dated Naulakha, Waite, Wendham Co., Vermont, December 6, 1895. Mr. Kipling inquired especially as to the source of "Miss Meadows and the Girls."

<sup>2</sup>The *Atlanta Journal*, April 16, 1914.

<sup>3</sup>The *London Sunday Times*, May 3, 1914; also *Current Opinion*, July, 1914, Vol. LVII., page 30, "Brer Rabbit and Mr. Fox as Foot-light Favorites in London."

Chandler Harris, *eine Abhandlung über den Neger als literarisches Objekt*." And he pronounced "Uncle Remus" "the most important individual contribution to American literature since 1870."<sup>1</sup> Whereupon the German reviewers responded with especial notice of Harris. Then followed the first really acceptable history of American literature by a German, Dr. Leon Kellner, professor in the University of Czernowitz, who gives the "Tar Baby Story" in English and translates it into German, declares that Harris has shown the deepest insight into the soul of the American negro, and accords him major writer's space.<sup>2</sup>

In France translation of the Uncle Remus stories has been included in a series known as "Les Livres Roses Pour La Jeunesse."<sup>3</sup> As stated in Smith's bibliography of Harris:

W. T. Stead (*London Review of Reviews*) began in 1896 a series known as "Books for the Bairns," of which "The Wonderful Adventure of Old Brer Rabbit" (July-September, 1896) was No. 6, "More Stories about Old Brer Rabbit" (January-March, 1898) No. 20, and "Brer Fox and Brer Rabbit" (January-June, 1901) No. 61. These three numbers included twenty-eight stories, fourteen [fifteen] from "Uncle Remus" and fourteen [thirteen] from "Nights with Uncle Remus." No. 6 was translated into French as "Les Merveilleuses Aventures du Vieux Frère Lapin," Paris, 1910; No. 20, as "Nouvelles Aventures du Vieux Frère La-

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<sup>1</sup>Die Amerikanische Literatur (Berlin, 1912), page 31: "Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings" (1880) (Seine Lieder und Ausprüche) ist der wichtigste einzelne Beitrag zur amerikanischen Literatur seit 1870."

<sup>2</sup>Geschichte der nordamerikanischen Literatur (Berlin and Leipsic, 1913), Vol. II., pages 75-82. "Den tiefsten Blick in die Seele des amerikanischen Negers hat Joel Chandler Harris." (Doubleday, Page & Co. brought this work out in America, translated from the German by Julia Franklin, May, 1915.)

<sup>3</sup>Librarie Larousse, Paris, 1910-11.

pin," Paris, 1911; and No. 61, as "Frère Renard et Frère Lapin," Paris, 1911.<sup>1</sup>

In Australia the booksellers carry "Uncle Remus" in their regular stock.<sup>2</sup>

In India during 1917 a boys' magazine called *Balak* (the Bengali for *boy*), published at Calcutta, carried a series of the legends translated into Bengali by C. E. Prior, a missionary.<sup>3</sup>

In Japan recently a guest in a Japanese home found "Uncle Remus" the only book in English.

Finally, in their Harris form the tales are going back to Africa.<sup>4</sup>

In America, of course, "Uncle Remus" is a name through which the ends of the continent may enter at once into friendly acquaintance. Mr. Harris was loved by the little children and honored by the great men of his country. Contemporary authors paid highest tribute to him and sought association with him. President Roosevelt declared that Georgia had done no greater thing than giving Harris to American literature.<sup>5</sup> He afterwards prevailed upon the "most modest writer in America" to be his guest at the White House.<sup>6</sup> Andrew Carnegie visited Harris in 1906

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<sup>1</sup>Cambridge History of American Literature.

<sup>2</sup>Report of National Secretary Young Women's Christian Association.

<sup>3</sup>C. E. Prior, in a letter to Mr. Harris from Calcutta, November 8, 1916, published in the *Atlanta Georgian*, January 16, 1917.

<sup>4</sup>Mrs. Myrta Lockett Avary. Introduction to the 'Visitors' Edition of "Uncle Remus and His Friends," 1914.

<sup>5</sup>Banquet speech in Atlanta, 1905.

<sup>6</sup>Letters in possession of Mrs. Harris. Mr. Roosevelt, says Mrs. A. McD. Wilson, President Uncle Remus Memorial Association, made possible the Association's purchase of the Wren's Nest by donating to the purpose the proceeds of a lecture in Atlanta, about \$5,000. Later Mr. Carnegie contributed a like amount.

and later subscribed himself on a portrait presented to the Wren's Nest as "not only an admirer, but a loving friend, of that rare soul." Mark Twain, in letter after letter, entreated Harris to visit him.<sup>1</sup> Riley spent some time in genial and affectionate association with Mr. Harris and his family in Atlanta. He afterwards wrote the following letter:

PHILADELPHIA, December 30, 1905.

Joel Chandler Harris, Esq.

*Dear Friend:* Your book of "New Stories of the Old Plantation" is here from your generous hand, and I am as tickled over it as old Brer Rabbit on the front cover. And I think it's the best of all Christmas books this year, just as last Christmas your "Tar Baby Rhymes" led all the list. La! but I want to see you and talk with you, loaf with you, meander round with you, or set still, jes' a-tradin' laughs or shut clean to a-sayin' nothin' 'cause we don't haf to!

To-day I got off four books to your care (by express). Nothin' new but the pictures, which in spots at least I know'll please you. How in fancy I see us a-really a-meet-in' up again, after these long years, and a-throwin' our heads back, a-sorto' teeterin' on one foot and a-hittin' the ground with the t'other, same lak a-peltin' a old dusty cyar-pet with a wet umbrell!

And now, on the dawn of the new year, come to you the heartfelt greetings and praises and gratefulness of

Your fraternal, ever-loving old Hoosier friend,

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

P. S.—To your household all fervent best wishes and continuous. *Do write to me!*"

Thomas Nelson Page wished Harris to join him on a lecture-reading tour<sup>2</sup> and declared: "No man who has ever written has known one-tenth part about the negro that Mr.

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<sup>1</sup>Letters in possession of Mrs. Harris.

<sup>2</sup>Letter in possession of Mrs. Harris.

<sup>3</sup>Letter dated Richmond, Va., September 27, 1887.

Harris knows."<sup>1</sup> And George W. Cable is said to have "smiled at all Southern names except Uncle Remus."<sup>2</sup>

The Uncle Remus Memorial Association, organized in Atlanta July 10, 1908 (one week after the great writer's death), purchased his home, "The Sign of the Wren's Nest," January 18, 1913, and has equipped it as a permanent memorial. During the first year 1,300 visitors registered; and from January to December, 1914, 2,523 registered, from forty-five States and seven foreign countries.

Notwithstanding the fact that he has made a permanent contribution to literature, is the most popularly read American author, and has been highly honored, no biography of Joel Chandler Harris has ever been written nor any adequate study of his career undertaken. Of the various interesting biographical sketches that have appeared, the most extensive was written by Mrs. Myrta Lockett Avary in 1913, published as a souvenir pamphlet by the Uncle Remus Memorial Association. Especially has the earlier half of the author's life been hastily passed over. The present volume, therefore, is based upon exhaustive researches, with particular reference to formative influences in his career, and covers Mr. Harris's life from obscurity in boyhood to fame in early manhood.

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<sup>1</sup>As quoted by Baskervill in "Southern Writers."

<sup>2</sup>New Orleans letter from Boston *Post*, Atlanta *Constitution*, August 5, 1881.

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**PART I**

*BIOGRAPHICAL*

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**J**OEL CHANDLER HARRIS was born in Eatonton, Putnam County, Georgia, December 9, 1848, and died at his home, "The Sign of the Wren's Nest," in Atlanta, about 8 P.M., July 3, 1908.<sup>1</sup>

One hundred and fifteen years had afforded abundant time for descendants of the Oglethorpe colony, together with their immigrating neighbors from Virginia and North Carolina, to transform wild hunting grounds and small maize fields of the Creeks and Cherokees into great plantations and wealthy towns. During the final decade of slavery ease and leisure were promoting the advance of culture, especially in Middle Georgia, and herein lies the significance to-day of the phrase "one of the good old towns" that is applied to Eatonton.

Still a small place of about two thousand people, preserving much of its ante-bellum character, it is near the geographical center of the State. It is certainly significant that within a day's drive of this village were born, before and during the time of Harris, most of Georgia's outstanding leaders in religion, literature, government, and war. In the same county was born L. Q. C. Lamar; in the adjoining county of Jasper, Ben Hill; to the north, about forty miles, Henry W. Grady and Atticus G. Haygood; to the northeast, less than fifty miles, Alexander Stephens, James O. Andrew, Robert Toombs, and, nearer by half, George F. Pierce; to the southwest, within fifty miles, John B. Gordon; to the south, less than forty miles, Sidney Lanier; and just across the Hancock line, Richard Malcolm Johnston. Then we

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<sup>1</sup>These dates are certified by the family.

are prepared to note further that this town was the center in Georgia about which were assembled the various educational institutions. Within the narrow circle (the radius of which might be traversed on foot between one's morning and evening meals) were planted by the State its university; by the Methodists, Emory College for boys and Wesleyan for girls; by the Baptists, Mercer University (Institute); by the Presbyterians, Oglethorpe University. Finally, the capital of the State, Milledgeville, was not twenty miles away.

Thus favorably located, Eatonton was a wealthy, cultured community; and Joe Harris was its little poor boy, to whom in many ways much assistance was given. Authentic account of his life begins when he was living with his mother and grandmother in a little one-room house on the edge of town in the early fifties. His mother pluckily earned a living for the three with her needle. She was a woman of strong character and quick mind, but, conscious of her poverty, lived to herself, rarely leaving the work that confined her indoors, except to attend church.<sup>1</sup>

A chum of boyhood and a friend throughout life gives the following account:

Our family moved to Eatonton about 1853, into a house not far from where Joe Harris was living with his mother and grandmother. It was very soon after our arrival that Joe appeared one morning at our woodpile, where we soon made acquaintance. In the days that followed we became fast friends for life. Joe didn't believe in work and always sat on the fence while my brother and I worked in the garden or elsewhere. Some years ago, when I read something about his "Snap Bean Farm," I laughed and said to myself, "Yes, I bet he ain't got two rows."

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<sup>1</sup>These facts are established by the testimony of John S. Reid and other aged citizens of Eatonton.

Well, he'd wait until we got through work, and then we'd be off up the branch hunting lizards or doing something else. Joe could run like a deer; and when we didn't want the company of my younger brother Jim [In the *Savannah News* Joe used to refer to him as Hon. James Nathan Leonard], he would hold him until I got a good start, throw his hat away, and then run off from him. He could throw, too, like a bullet. I remember one day he spied, hanging right over my head, a wasp nest that I didn't see. With one rock he dropped that nest, full of wasps, square in my face as I looked up. Joe was gone like a flash, but my face was swollen so that I could hardly see for a week.

Mr. McDade's livery stable was a great place for us. Fine horses were often brought from Kentucky and Ohio, and the drovers would let us ride them to the blacksmith shop or for exercise. Collecting bird eggs was another great amusement, and we had many kinds that nobody but ourselves knew. But I suppose our biggest fun was in running rabbits. Mr. Harvey Dennis, who lived across the bottom and up on the hill from Joe's house, had some very fine fox hounds. We would get out and clap our hands and yell until those dogs would rush down and follow us. Pretty soon here would come Mr. Dennis after us; but he would just say: "Well, boys, you've got my dogs running rabbits again!" He had good reason not to get mad, because Joe used to help him keep his dogs in training by dragging a fox hide around through the fields and woods for three or four miles and then sitting up in a tree till the dogs followed the trail and treed him.

Nearly every time we hunted over in the neighborhood of the graveyard we would see a rabbit run out through one same hole. Not far away lived a fortune teller, who, I remember, gave us a chase one day. It looked like the very same rabbit, of course, that ran through the graveyard each time, and Joe would declare it was that fortune teller turned into a rabbit. Sometimes the rabbit we were after would hop out in sight of us and appear to spit on his front paws. When Joe saw that, he would say: "He's gone now; we'll never get him." One day Joe and I came in from a long tramp very hungry. His mother fixed up some

batter and told Joe he could cook the cakes. After he had turned them several times, he wheeled about and ran the blunt side of the flapper around my neck. It burned so that I thought my throat was cut, and I threw up my hands in horror. His mother was so amused that she laughed as if she couldn't stop. There was a blistered ring around my neck for several days.

For a year or two we went to a mixed school taught by a lady from the North, Miss Kate Davidson. Then we went to the male academy. Joe, Hut Adams, a boy older than either of us, and myself were boon friends, and we rarely mixed with others. I remember how, coming together from school north along Washington Street, one block from the town square, Hut would drop out at his house first, then at McDade's stable Joe would turn out Marion Street a hundred yards to his house, while my house was straight on out Washington Street about two hundred yards from Hut's. School seemed to be from sunup to sundown, with only a dinner recess. But on our way to and from school, on Saturdays, and sometimes on Sundays, we had great times at marbles, tops, pole-jumping, stealing watermelons<sup>1</sup> from Mr. Edmund Reid, and robbing Colonel Nicholson's and Aunt Betty Pike's orchards. Hut was the only man in the crowd that had a handkerchief, with which we used to seine for minnows. He had a gun, too. Joe and I would tramp all over the woods and fields with him, carrying the game, in order to have one shot apiece. Hut got us into a lot of deviltry, of course. But Joe got off many a good joke on him.

I remember once we were in Colonel Nicholson's orchard. Hut was high up in a tree. Joe saw the Colonel at a distance, walking with his stick, and called up to Hut: "Yonder comes Colonel Nicholson with his gun." Hut didn't stop to look, but let loose and fell to the ground. Then such a scramble he made ahead of us through the thick, high weeds! The best one of all, Joe pulled off one day when we were on our way back to school from dinner. Near the street were the remains of an old log barn, with

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<sup>1</sup>See editorial page, *Atlanta Constitution*, August 17, 1884.

only the walls standing, some eight feet high, possibly. Joe had observed through the cracks that hogs had for a long time made their beds inside. So, while we were all jumping with our poles, he dared Hut to jump over one of the walls. Hut leaped and tumbled over. When he had recovered himself and come out, he began madly scratching his legs; and in a moment we all saw his light-colored breeches simply peppered with giant hog fleas. Hut made for Joe; but Joe was quick enough to get away home, where he stayed until the next day. Hut had to go home and change his clothes before he went back to school.<sup>1</sup>

Leading from near Joe's house toward mine was a big gully, which, with its tributaries, was our favorite playground. We organized the "Gully Minstrels." Joe had a fiddle that he couldn't play, and he made a most ridiculous clown. Aunt Betsy Cuthbert, an old free negro, lived just above the gully toward the stable. We thought there was nobody like old Aunt Betsy, especially because she gave us such good ginger cakes and pies.<sup>2</sup>

Those good times before the war passed swiftly. I shall never forget when Joe left us to begin work in the printing shop on Mr. Turner's plantation. When the negro drove by with his little trunk, I told Joe good-by as he got in the wagon and was driven away.<sup>3</sup>

The attention of kindly friends in Eatonton was drawn to Joe Harris when, having learned to read at six years of age, he appeared at Sunday school, clean and neatly dressed, mentally alert and active.<sup>4</sup> His mother kindled in him the

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<sup>1</sup>On the afternoon of September 5, 1916, Mrs. Harris told the author of how Mr. Leonard and Mr. Harris recalled and laughed over this incident during one of Mr. Leonard's visits to his old friend in West End (Atlanta).

<sup>2</sup>See editorial page, *Atlanta Constitution*, August 17, 1884.

<sup>3</sup>This account was given the author by Mr. Charles D. Leonard in Eatonton August 31-September 1, 1916.

<sup>4</sup>Mr. Harris often spoke of the Eatonton friends who were kind to him. He is quoted as to this in the *Children's Visitor* (Nashville, Tenn.), November 23, 1902.

intellectual and literary flame by reading aloud at least one book, Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield," until he held extensive passages in memory.<sup>1</sup> So it came about, says Mrs. B. W. Hunt, an intimate friend who sometimes studied from the same book with him, that, when a little private school for girls and boys was organized by a teacher from Connecticut, Joe was entered probably at the expense of some friend and kept in attendance for three or four years, until he was old enough to enter the private school for boys.<sup>2</sup> Capt. John S. Reid, now Ordinary of Putnam County, says that he taught Joe in this boys' school, where he was in attendance for about a year and a half, being charged nothing for his tuition. Captain Reid says, further, that he was the best composition writer in his grade.<sup>3</sup> According to Harris's own statement in later life, he had followed the reading of the "Vicar of Wakefield" with some attempts at writing after the fashion of that book.<sup>4</sup> He had become fond of reading, and from the libraries of cultured friends came to him very stimulative literature. Mrs. Hunt recalls his special interest in Scott, Smollet, and Lamb.

Some way might have been found for this promising boy to continue his education had not the war come. However, it was to some purpose that the colleges were hard by. He may well have known that during the first six years of his life Emory College had as its president George F. Pierce, from just across the Oconee River, and during six years of his later life J. R. Thomas, from the adjoining county of

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<sup>1</sup>*Dippincott's Monthly Magazine*, April, 1886, "An Accidental Author," J. C. Harris.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. B. W. Hunt (*née* Louise Prudden), of Eatonton, Ga. (Oral statement.)

<sup>3</sup>Capt. John S. Reid, of Eatonton, Ga. (Oral statement.)

<sup>4</sup>Ray Stannard Baker, "Joel Chandler Harris," *Outlook*, November 5, 1904, Vol. LXXVIII., pages 594-603.

Hancock. He may well have heard how Mercer had been founded by Rev. Jesse Mercer, the great Baptist preacher of the preceding generation, who had been famous for his long and powerful ministry in adjoining counties and who had organized and for six years been pastor of a Church in Eatonton. But the direct and certain influence fell upon him from Oglethorpe University, at Milledgeville. For when, in the alternating order of the village Church services, came Presbyterian Sunday at the little union church, there were often had from Oglethorpe eloquent preachers, notable among whom were the learned professor of science, afterwards president of the University of South Carolina, James Woodrow, uncle of Woodrow Wilson, and the president, S. K. Talmage, uncle of DeWitt Talmage. Doubtless Emory also, and possibly Mercer, furnished equally inspiring preachers for the Eatonton congregation. In "Sister Jane," written in the first person and partly autobiographical,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Harris, after drawing on his clear memory doubtless as much as imagination in describing a certain church, preacher, and sermon, records, in effect at least, a very important section of his own experience when he writes :

I found myself, therefore, with a good many other men, sitting in the pews usually reserved for the women. I was one pew behind that in which Sister Jane sat—on the very seat, as I suddenly discovered, that I had sometimes occupied when a boy, not willingly, but in deference to the commands of Sister Jane [his mother, probably], who, in those days long gone, made it a part of her duty to take me prisoner every Sunday morning and carry me to church, whether or no.<sup>2</sup>

There is, of course, no possibility of determining just what good seeds were sown by some of these preachers in

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<sup>1</sup>So says Mrs. Harris.      <sup>2</sup>"Sister Jane."

the receptive mind and heart of this more or less recalcitrant young hearer, but we are probably apt to underestimate the influence. Religious touches in "Sister Jane" and in his writings elsewhere show that he was familiar with the Scriptures, evidently from his youth. And his vigorous mind must have reacted as, through the persons as well as through the words of these prominent men, secular interests and ambitions were gratuitously borne in upon him with matters of divine concern. For the thoughtful student of his life there is much left unsaid in this playful account of the hour at church after Sister Jane had gathered in the youngster:

I used to sit and wish for the end, until the oblivion of sleep lifted me beyond the four walls and out into the freedom of the woods and fields. Sometimes the preacher, anxious to impress some argument upon the minds of his hearers, would bring his fist down on the closed Bible with a bang that startled me out of dreamland.

Out of one dreamland he was doubtless swept by the eloquence of the orator into another, truly beyond the four walls out into the world of men and affairs. For that was still the regnant day of the orator, especially the preacher, when the pulpit reached farther than the press.

But the press too was moving upon his awakened mind and was the immediate agency that started him upon his career. He is recalled by Mrs. Hunt as "a shy little recluse," who seemed to find often a desirable retreat in the post office, where Mrs. Hunt's father, Mr. Prudden, was the kindly postmaster, who gave Joe access to various newspapers, particularly the "every Tuesday" *Recorder* and *Federal Union*, from the capital city of the State. A vivid description of the post office is made the starting point for Mr. Harris's narrative, most completely autobiographical, "On the Plantation." (In this book Mr. Harris presents himself



## Biographical

under the name of Joe Maxwell.) Much in the same as he wrote of the long sermons, of these papers he writes:

What he found in those papers to interest him it would be hard to say. They were full of political essays that were popular in those days, and they had long reports of political conventions and meetings from all parts of the State. They were papers for grown people, and Joe Maxwell was only twelve years old and small for his age.<sup>1</sup>

But there came a paper on February 25, 1862, when he had reached the age of fourteen, in which his quick eye found down among the advertisements an announcement certain to be eagerly seized upon by his mind, now prepared for a thing of this nature. Within nine miles of his home, right out on a plantation, was to be established by a planter whom he knew (so read the advertisement) a weekly paper that was to be modeled after his beloved Goldsmith's paper, the *Bee*, Addison's little paper, the *Spectator*, and Johnson's little paper, the *Rambler*, and was to be distributed from this his very own post office. Recalling his tremendous shock of joy on reading this announcement, Mr. Harris wrote in later life: "Joe read this advertisement over a dozen times, and it was with a great deal of impatience that he waited for the next Tuesday to come." Tuesday came and brought the first issue of the promised paper, called *The Countryman*, to that boy, whose careful and exhaustive perusal of it brought him to his life's crisis. Again it was down among the advertisements that he found the matter of moment:

WANTED—An active, intelligent white boy, fourteen or fifteen years of age, is wanted at this office to learn the printing business.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"On the Old Plantation."

<sup>2</sup>*The Countryman*, March 4, 1862.

Here faced him his crucial opportunity. Trembling with mingled timidity and delight, he arose to meet it. From "On the Plantation" we take the following reminiscence:

Joe borrowed pen and ink and paper from the friendly postmaster and wrote a letter to the editor, saying that he would be glad to learn the printing business. The letter was no doubt an awkward one, but served its purpose, for when the editor of *The Countryman* came to Hillsboro [Eaton-ton] he hunted Joe up and told him to get ready to go to the plantation. The lad, not without some misgivings, put away his tops and marbles, packed his little belongings in an old-fashioned trunk, and set forth on what turned out to be the most important journey of his life.<sup>1</sup>

So came Joe Harris, with the bent of his genius well shaped, to the occasion of leaving his first home. The apparent influences that had upbuilt him in that home were his mother, friends, reading, school, atmospheric inspiration, the pulpit, and the press. And the post office, that medium through which the world outside came into the village and the village went forth into the world beyond, was a fitting place for him to spend his leisure hours, awaiting the vision of his future.

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Harris's account of this experience was given also in an interview for the *Atlanta News*. (See Lee's "Uncle Remus," page 25.)

## II

EATONTON had done all it could toward the making of Harris. Under the favoring influences that this little Middle Georgia town contributed, he had well prepared for the decisive hour of his career, whose future success demanded now that he leave his childhood home for another more favorable to his maturing years. A drive of less than two hours carried him to Turnwold, the plantation home of Mr. J. A. Turner, editor of *The Countryman*. A most extended journey could no more surely have carried him into a new world.

Happily removed from the various warlike activities of the town to the calm of the country, he was, by the nature of his employment, perhaps saved from later conscription. In *The Countryman* of October 4, 1864, Mr. Turner wrote:

In our office we have one or, at most, two able-bodied men. Yet some liar told the enrolling officer of this county that every employee in our office was a large, strong, able-bodied man. An effort was made to take the lame and the halt [Mr. Turner] and even an infant (in the eye of the law) [probably a boy employed later than Harris] out of our office and put them into military service. We have in *The Countryman* office only one, or at most two [possibly includes Harris], able to do military service.

Then follows an assertion of the need of men to keep up the publication of newspapers. On October 15, 1864 (?), a young friend of Harris's, W. F. Williams, wrote him from Columbus, Georgia, a most interesting letter about dodging conscript officers. His papers (he, too, was a printer) had not been properly made out by the "wooden-headed enrolling officer" in Eatonton. "You can tell Smith," he concludes,

"if you should see him, he is a jackass." Conscription or any active concern with the affairs of the war would possibly have precluded such literary work as Harris later gave to our country and to the world. Here, then, is our first debt to the Turnwold home.

During these four years, when practically every man and youth in the South was torn away alike from trade and study, how must Providence have taken in care Joe Harris, binding him in such a fortunate apprenticeship to the printer's trade as would possibly surpass even the college, whose doors were then closed, in preparing an author for the future! With Mr. Turner as the faculty, with his library of a thousand volumes, with the printing office as the literary laboratory, and with the whole plantation as the campus, he was, indeed, to pass through a most wonderful four-year curriculum, coming thence into the world with his talents developed and his career prepared for. Here we discover the supreme formative influences upon the life of Joel Chandler Harris. An adequate study of these influences will bring us to thoroughly established conclusions as to the preparation of Harris for his great life work.

Mr. Joseph Addison Turner was a highly cultured lawyer-planter of the old school. He was born in Putnam County, Georgia, September 23, 1826. His formal education was limited to a brief period in the local Phoenix Academy and a fall term (1845) at Emory College, Oxford, Georgia. But his father, William Turner, who had begun teaching him while with lameness from necrosis the boy was yet confined to his bed, must have led him judiciously along the path of learning to where he might travel alone. That he went forward until he might soon be called a liberally educated man is seen by a glance at his later intellectual accomplishments. Upon his return from Emory College he was put in charge of Phoenix Academy and gave full satis-

faction during the year of his teaching. In 1847 he took up in Eatonton the reading of law under a relation, Col. Junius Wingfield, and was after a few months admitted to the bar. Beginning to write for publication at the age of twenty, he was for the remainder of his life exceedingly active in literary production. He had published volumes of poetry and prose and undertaken the publication of more than one magazine previous to establishing *The Countryman*.<sup>1</sup>

The personality and character of this man may well be noted before approaching directly his influence as a man of letters upon Harris, because the young apprentice was taken into Mr. Turner's home as a member of the family. Mr. Turner was to him a congenial spirit, and in his later life there is reflected at more than one point the moral influence that then fell upon him. The brusque manner of the editor must appear very vividly in a few words from his prospectus in *The Countryman* of September 15, 1863:

Now, if you like my terms . . . ; if not, keep away, and be sure not to get into any palaver or argument with me about my terms, nor to think you are doing me a favor, for the favor is the other way. I don't do business of any kind but one way, and every one must conform to my rules.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time he was full of humor. And when we come to consider his literary influence upon Harris, we shall be reminded of this assertion about himself:

Both in my writings and conversations I am compelled by nature to be an inveterate joker and humorist and indulge my humor, repartee, or joke at the risk of offending my best friend. I cannot possibly help it. But there is no sting nor malice in my jokes; and if they offend, I am sure to ask forgiveness.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Autobiographical sketch by Mr. Turner in *The Countryman*, February, 1866.

<sup>2</sup>*The Countryman*, September 15, 1863.    <sup>3</sup>Autobiographical sketch.

To many who merely met Mr. Harris after he became famous, especially to those misguided individuals, as he called them, who sought autographs, and to those who exercised too little discretion and tact in seeking "an interview," he certainly appeared quite as brusque as Mr. Turner; yet every one knew that no malice had place in his heart. And he was always fond of a joke. Joe Turner and Joe Harris must have been often as boys together in their fun, and doubtless the younger boy won forever the heart of the older one when in the old printing office he perpetrated a splendid piece of mischief upon a tramp printer. It was on publication day that the wandering printer came by. In return for his dinner he agreed to help "run off" the paper. He was unwilling to go to the house. So Harris brought his dinner to him and told him that some ladies were later coming out to look through the office. It was in August, and the tramp had discarded his shirt in order to work with more comfort at the hand press. Suddenly Joe Harris called, "Here they come!" and rushed to the door, leaving the other to clamber out of a rear window upon an adjoining tin-covered shed. Joe at once struck up a conversation, saying: "I shall first show you the press—how you ink the forms, pull down the lever, etc." Slowly he proceeded to the type cases and there began a detailed description of typesetting. The tramp, after sweltering for some time under the fierce sun's rays, with his naked body fairly baking against the tin roof, ventured to a crack in the wall and discovered that Joe's guests were all imaginary.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Julian Harris tells of how, while he was once riding on an Atlanta street car with his father, Mr. Harris nudged him and, with that famous twinkle in his eye, directed his attention across the aisle to a nodding neighbor whose meal,

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<sup>1</sup>Account given by Mr. J. T. Manry. (See page 85.)

in a sack pressed between his knees, was gradually slipping out through a hole in the bottom of the sack. With the giving away of the sack the sleepy fellow was aroused and thought he detected the fun lurking in Mr. Harris's face. "Harris, you scamp," said he, "why didn't you tell me?" "I thought possibly you had a purpose in doing that," replied Harris.<sup>1</sup>

These incidents reveal the real Harris, although only the fortunate few knew him so. Sometimes he would come into the editorial offices of the *Constitution*, says Frank Stanton, and, finding too serious and heavy an air upon his associates, jump up, crack his heels together, and do the old-fashioned cornfield negro shuffle so perfectly that good humor prevailed for the rest of the week.<sup>2</sup>

We think at once of Mr. Harris's unwillingness to make any claims for the literary value of his work when we read from Mr. Turner the following:

It is entirely foreign to the nature of a Southern gentleman to advertise himself or to drum for subscribers. This is one reason why so few Southern literary or miscellaneous journals succeed. But it is absolutely necessary that the Southern people should have these kinds of journals, and to some extent these must use the means to success. I have got my consent to advertise; but to drum, never! I could not under any circumstances ask men to subscribe for my paper. It is not genteel to do so.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Turner was not a member of any Church, though he was a Sunday school teacher and certainly a religious man.<sup>4</sup> "*The Countryman*," he declared (Vol. II., No. 2), "is what self-styled 'orthodoxy' calls 'heterodoxy'—stands for liber-

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<sup>1</sup>Oral account by Mr. Julian Harris.

<sup>2</sup>Oral statement of Frank L. Stanton, of the *Atlanta Constitution*.

<sup>3</sup>*The Countryman*, Vol. II., No. 1.

<sup>4</sup>*The Countryman*, July 12, 1862.

al and enlightened religion, as opposed to sectarian creedism." (September 15, 1863.) Writing of an incident when Stonewall Jackson, after a sermon, administered the sacrament to members of all denominations, he wished that Jackson had invited everybody instead of Church members only, adding: "I would have liked myself, even I, who am no Church member and never expect to be one—I would have liked to have the privilege granted me of communing with the Christians." (October 20, 1862.) But he also wrote: "The Church as founded by our Saviour is a good and sufficient society of itself for the amelioration and moral government of mankind. The blood of Christ saves souls." (July 12, 1862.) "The Church and Christianity must and will survive the wreck of bigotry and intolerance. We know not what to do without the Church and Christianity." (April 7, 1863.) Of the Catholic Church he wrote that he had been trained to oppose it, but had overcome all prejudice. (September 13, 1864.) On one occasion he served as preacher, publishing his sermon in *The Countryman*, March 13, 1866:

### PEACE

#### THE ORIGIN AND END OF CHRISTIANITY—A SERMON

BY J. A. TURNER

Preached at an examination at Union Academy, Putnam County, Georgia, July 27, 1865. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." (Luke ii. 14.)

That Harris was indelibly impressed by the religious doctrines and eccentricities of Mr. Turner cannot be doubted. Although he came from a Methodist home and, as we have seen, was carried regularly to Sunday school and preaching as long as he was in Eatonton, yet, like Mr. Turner, he allied himself with no Church until on his deathbed, shortly



before the end, he was received into the Catholic Church, the Church of his wife.<sup>1</sup> There is abundant evidence, however, that he was a very devout man. Rev. J. W. Lee, preaching in Trinity Methodist Church (Atlanta) a memorial sermon after Mr. Harris's death, said: "He was a devoted follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. He told me not long ago that all the agnostics and materialists in creation could never shake his faith." Mr. Harris once said: "The most important conviction of my life was when I came fully to realize that a personal Providence watched over me from day to day. With me it is no longer a belief, but a fact. I have been on the brink of ruin many times, and God has always rescued me."<sup>2</sup>

In politics Mr. Turner was prominent. He was elected to the State Senate on an independent ticket. Of *The Countryman* he declared that it was not a party paper, but that its purpose in politics would be to "oppose radicalism and favor conservatism."<sup>3</sup> So far as Harris was concerned, Mr. Turner's attitude toward the war is the matter of chief concern, and we find that his influence must have been such as to contribute to the peace-breathing atmosphere of our post-bellum author. It is good to have from him the following words:

In 1860, upon resuming my seat in the Senate, I found myself without a party with which to act; and consequently, so far as the great question of secession was concerned, I bore no prominent part. One party was, I thought, in favor of secession in any event, and the other I considered in favor of unconditional submission. Hence I could decide

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<sup>1</sup>Oral statement of Mrs. Harris.

<sup>2</sup>Boston *Globe*, November 3, 1907. James B. Morrow.

<sup>3</sup>See *The Countryman*, April 7, 1863, December 22, 1862, and Vol. II., Nos. 2 and 5.

with neither. I looked upon both parties as infatuated—one driven by madness upon the trail of blood and the other imbecile with fear and insane with a blind attachment to a Union already in spirit gone. I am not a man for war, but emphatically a peace man. I wrote an article for the *Federal Union* urging the appointment of Northern and Southern commissioners to arrange for a peaceable dissolution of the Union. I also wrote a resolution to the same effect, which was introduced into the Senate by Hon. H. C. Fulton, of Columbia County.<sup>1</sup>

During the war the Turner plantation did not remain untouched. *The Countryman* published correspondence from the battle front. Again and again were recorded, in the list of slain, names of friends who had marched away from Putnam; and often upon the editor and his printers fell the duty of carrying in person the sad news to the bereaved families and of ministering as they were able to those left in need. And the editor suffered in person and property from the war. Upon charge of publishing disloyal articles, he was on one occasion somewhat roughly seized and held for a time under military arrest by General Wilson in Macon, Georgia. The paper was then placed under such restrictions that no publication was undertaken between June 27, 1865, and January 30, 1866. The following items appear in *The Countryman* of December 6, 1864:

Sun., 20th Nov.—Sent nine [mules and negroes] to the swamp, but stayed at home myself. About one or two o'clock four or five Yankees came, professing they would behave as gentlemen. These gentlemen, however, stole my gold watch and silver spoons. . . . Four more [Yankees], . . . two Dutchmen. These raided the hat factory.

A mob of savage Yankees and Europeans, surrounding us with the pistol and the torch, . . . our children frightened and weeping about us.

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<sup>1</sup>Autobiographical sketch.

It is not surprising that Mr. Turner himself sometimes took to the swamp. But he saw the humor of it, being able to refresh his readers with such accounts as the following, in *The Countryman*, August 2, 1864:

#### THE RAIDERS AT HAND

One o'clock P.M., Tuesday, August 2.—After writing the above [an account of the presence of Yankees in the neighborhood], it seemed to be made evident that we must become *non comeditibus in swampo* (whither we retired) or become ourselves prisoners. The female portion of our family decided the former was better for us, and we acted upon this suggestion. To-day Wheeler's cavalry possessed attraction enough to draw us from our covert, and so we have emerged to finish our notes in our sanctum.

In his "Autobiography" he reviews his experiences of those days thus:

After the commencement of the war I did all I could to feed and clothe the soldiers and the soldiers' families. I organized a hat factory on my plantation during the war and never turned off any one, especially a soldier, hatless. If the applicant said he was unable to purchase a hat, then I gave him one. And now I hold an account of several thousand dollars against the deceased Confederacy for hats purchased by it for its soldiers. Not only have I lost heavily in this way, but lost very heavily by Sherman's invasion. And yet at the same time I was spending not only my income, but my capital and my time and energies, to serve, people maddened by the insane cry of speculation and extortion raised by demagogues . . . denounced me as a "speculator and extortioner." I, however, tried to make a joke of my losses, as my nature requires me to do of almost everything. I gave a humorous account in my paper of the Yankee visit to my house; and I published in *The Countryman* a humorous letter to General Sherman, touching the destruction of my property, which was copied into nearly every paper throughout the land and declared by the *Augusta Constitutionalist* to be unsurpassed for rollicking humor.

Eloquent are the changing mottoes adopted by the editor for his paper as the war progressed to its conclusion. First: "Brevity is the soul of wit." After September 22, 1863: "Independent in Everything, Neutral in Nothing." After June 6, 1865: "Independent in Nothing, Neutral in Everything." After June 30, 1866: "Devoted to the Editor's Opinions." At the close of the war he was able to make a clear declaration of peace in *The Countryman*, June 6, 1865: "Reunion—Henceforth we desire to know no North, no South, no East, no West, but one common country."

Joe Harris, situated as he was at this time, was bound to see the various aspects of affairs largely through the eyes of Mr. Turner. The sentiments of *The Countryman* are reflected wherever is given in "On the Plantation" any account of the war. Apropos of one of the items quoted above is to be read from this book of Mr. Harris's the following:

Joe saw a good deal of these foragers; and he found them all, with one exception, to be good-humored. The exception was a German, . . . [who] came to the store-room where the hats were kept, wanted to take off as many as his horse could carry, and . . . became angry when Joe protested. He grew so angry, in fact, that he would have fired the building—and was in the act—when an officer ran in and gave him a tremendous paddling with the flat of his sword. It was an exhibition as funny as a scene in a circus.<sup>1</sup>

In the same chapter (page 228) he recalls ludicrously his predicament when, having wandered one day along the road to Milledgeville, and having climbed upon a rail fence to rest, there came by, all unexpectedly, the Twentieth Army Corps of Federals, commanded by General Slocum. He writes:

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<sup>1</sup>"On the Plantation," page 226.

They splashed through the mud, cracking their jokes and singing snatches of songs. Joe Maxwell [Harris], sitting on the fence, was the subject of many a jest as the good-humored men marched by:

"Hello, Johnny! Where's your parasol?"

"Jump down, Johnny, and let me kiss you good-by!"

"Johnny, if you are tired, get up behind and ride!"

.....  
"Where's the rest of your regiment, Johnny?"

"If there was another one of 'em a-setting on the fence on t'other side, I'd say we was surrounded."

Here was Sherman's march through Georgia as seen by Joel Chandler Harris, a boy on the plantation. There followed the passing of the Yankees an incident whose pathos was so powerful as almost alone to have determined the spirit of Harris's later writing about the negro. His account of it is given its rightful place near the close of his book:

This incident has had many adaptations. It occurred just as it is given here, and was published afterwards in *The Countryman*. In the corner of the fence, not far from the road, Joe found an old negro woman shivering and moaning. Near her lay an old negro man, his shoulders covered with an old ragged shawl.

"Who is that lying there?" asked Joe.

"It my ole man, suh."

"What is the matter with him?"

"He dead, suh; but, bless God, he died free!"

It was a pitiful sight and a pitiful ending of the old couple's dream of freedom. Harbert and the other negroes buried the old man, and the old woman was made comfortable in one of the empty cabins. She never ceased to bless "little marster," as she called Joe, giving him the credit for all that was done for her. Old as she was, she and her husband had followed the army for many a weary mile on the road to freedom. The old man found it in the fence corner, and a few weeks later the old woman found it in the humble cabin.

We need extend our view of Mr. Turner's politics and the effects of the war experiences upon him only to note his attitude toward the freed negro. He promptly announced to his one hundred slaves that the war had freed them from any bondage to him and that henceforth they were their own masters. But he said also to them that they need not wander homeless away, but that the old doors were open still, and that they might, if they wished, remain in their homes with him. No slave of Mr. Turner's was suffered to experience that exiledom and want which seemed a likely lot for the negroes upon their emancipation. And so Harris, remaining on the plantation until *The Countryman* ceased to be published, saw many of the old slaves taken under the protection and care of their former master, who also gave employment to others who had fled from less favorable conditions. One of the last editorials that he set in type for Mr. Turner, February 13, 1866, might well have been written by Henry Grady when the lingering clouds of war were finally disappearing many years later. With all of Grady's longing for peace and willingness to do his share, Mr. Turner wrote:

If the negro is forced upon us as a citizen, we go for educating him, inducing him to accumulate property and to do other things which make a good citizen. In his attempts at elevating himself he should receive all the aid and encouragement in the power of our people to give him.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, while Mr. Turner was a most ardent Southerner and had his hatred of the Yankees, the prevailing influence that he exerted upon Harris from 1862 to 1866 was seasoning the young man's mind and heart with sympathy for the negro and a longing for peace for the nation.

Here we are led from our consideration of the teacher—

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, February 13, 1866.

the faculty, as we have called Mr. Turner in characterizing Mr. Harris's four-year educational course at Turnwold—to a consideration of the campus, as we have called the plantation. We have only to note those things that have a distinct bearing upon Harris's later work, and they stand out so clearly that we can present them briefly.

Everything worth while was made possible through that relationship of Mr. Turner with his slaves, the character of which has already been shown. The interracial atmosphere of the plantation determined the character of Harris's great literary work. Had such conditions existed here as Mrs. Stowe found where she chanced to be for a short time, the world to-day would not know Uncle Remus. Had Mr. Turner as a heartless master allowed some overseer, such as was occasionally found on ~~the~~ plantations, to stir his negroes with fear and anger, there might have grown prejudice in the mind of young Harris, unfitting him for that calm representation of normal plantation life in the South which, along with the writings of Page and others, has well-nigh corrected the false impression that had previously been so widely made in other sections of the country. Had lack of confidence in their master caused to creep into the minds of the negroes the faintest suspicions, Joe Harris would never have been favored with the recital of those wonderful folk tales reserved by the Africans for the children whom they fancied. When during the war rumors of a general slave uprising spread terror through scores of plantations, there was no uneasiness at Turnwold. Mr. Turner knew his slaves too well and felt too steadily their confidence in him for any such rumor to disturb him. Masters and overseers on other plantations, in dread of massacre, might organize a patrol system and hold the negroes under terror, but no "patter-rollers" dared trespass upon the peaceful slave quar-

ters at Turnwold.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately enough, "Marster" so treated his negroes that "Little Marster" came into an inheritance of affection that he knew how to appreciate and quickly learned how to nourish, until every black on the plantation was bound in his friendship, and his acquaintance was extended among those on neighboring plantations.<sup>2</sup>

There were two things in particular that caused Joe Harris to cultivate the friendship of the negroes. It will be recalled that in Eatonton he was a "shy little recluse." Such was his character everywhere else, but the good old slaves made him forget all his shyness. He felt relieved of all restraint when in their company. He has told us how painfully sensitive he was from early boyhood; but who can conceive of an old slave's injuring any one's feelings? As he grew older his occasional visits to his mother in Eatonton must have developed his consciousness of her loneliness and his humble fortune, and doubtless he went downcast and melancholy many times to some old soothing "mammy" who knew just how to meet the occasion. He could not always talk out of his heart to the other printers and to Mr. Turner; but when hunting with a simple-minded black companion, he was assured of a sympathetic listener to whatever he might say, and so could unburden his soul or set his fancy free. For this reason, then, he sought the companionship of well-chosen friends among the negroes. Again, there were the Turner children, boys and girls of eight and ten and twelve. Children, no less than friendly old slaves, brought relief and happiness to Joe Harris. Many a glad hour, the happiest of his life he would undoubtedly have declared, must he have spent rollicking with these little chums. "I

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<sup>1</sup>Compare the Abercrombie plantation in "Aaron in the Wild Woods," especially page 213.

<sup>2</sup>Note the story of Mink in "On the Plantation," Aaron in "Aaron in the Wild Woods," etc.



was fond of children," he says, "but not in the usual way, which means a hug, a kiss, and a word in passing. I get down to their level—think with them and play with them." Mrs. Harris says he would not tell stories to his children, because that would lift him above them, but rather would sometimes roll on the floor with them.\* At Turnwold began this love of children, which was the incentive to much of his work as an author. These children were much of the time in the affectionate care of devoted slaves, to whom on this account Joe was drawn more closely. In Chapter VIII. of "On the Plantation" we have Mr. Harris's own account, as follows:

Harbert's house on the Turner place was not far from the kitchen, and the kitchen itself was only a few feet removed from the big house—in fact, there was a covered passageway between them. From the back steps of the kitchen two pieces of hewn timber, half buried in the soil, led to Harbert's steps, thus forming, as the negro called it, a wet-weather path, over which Mr. Turner's children could run when the rest of the yard had been made muddy by the fall and winter rains. Harbert used to sit at night and amuse the children with his reminiscences and his stories. The children might tire of their toys, their ponies, and everything else; but they could always find something to interest them in Harbert's house. There were few nights, especially during the winter, that did not find them seated by the negro's white hearthstone. Frequently Joe Maxwell [Harris] would go there and sit with them, especially when he was feeling lonely and homesick.

Thus we understand how Mr. Harris could say in his introduction to "Nights with Uncle Remus" that he had been familiar with the tales from his boyhood. The negro songs, too, became familiar to him at this time. Mr. Turner

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\*Boston *Globe*, November 3, 1907. James B. Morrow.

\*Oral statement of Mrs. Harris.

tells how his youngest son, Joe Syd, had learned songs from the negroes. He specifies one, called "Have My Way." Of "Uncle Remus," who, Mr. Harris declared,<sup>2</sup> was a kind of "human syndicate" of several old negroes he had known, Mr. Ivy Lee writes:

The original was in many respects "Ole Uncle" George Terrell, a negro owned before the war by Mr. J. A. Turner. In the ancient days "Uncle" George Terrell owned an old-fashioned Dutch oven. On this he made most wonderful ginger cakes every Saturday. He would sell these cakes and persimmon beer, also of his own brew, to children of planters for miles around. He was accustomed to cook his own supper on this old oven every evening. And it was at twilight, by the light of the kitchen fire, that he told his quaint stories to the Turner children and at the same time to Joel C. Harris. Men now, who were boys then, still relate their joy at listening to the story of "The Wonderful Tar Baby" as they sat in front of that old cabin munching ginger cakes while "Uncle" George Terrell was cooking supper on his Dutch oven.<sup>3</sup>

The negroes, the children, and the animals made the three angles of the triangle into the magic of which Harris entered in 1862, to come forth himself the master magician in 1880. His close and constant contact with domestic and wild animals was a part of the normal life on the plantation. What boy from the town would not have found an immediate interest in horses called Butterfly, Tadpole, Bullfrog, and dogs called Hell Cat, Biscuit, and Devil? These names, indeed, are a commentary on the more than mere property interest of Mr. Turner himself in his domestic animals. A

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, April 4, 1865.

<sup>2</sup>*Boston Globe*, November 3, 1907. James B. Morrow.

<sup>3</sup>"Uncle Remus," Ivy Lee. The facts as quoted are confirmed by old citizens, who recall also Harris's early association with "Uncle" Bob Capers, an Eatonton teamster owned by the Capers family, "Aunt" Betsy Cuthbert, and other good old slaves.

quarter of a century afterwards Mr. Harris sought to represent the character of Mr. Turner in this respect and at the same time revealed his own heart by means of an idealized account of his going from Eatonton to begin his residence at Turnwold. He wrote that as he and Mr. Turner drove together along the way "the editor in a fanciful way went on to talk about Ben Bolt and Bob Roy as if they were persons instead of horses; but it did not seem fanciful to Joe, who had a strange sympathy with animals of all kinds, especially horses and dogs. It pleased him greatly to think that he had ideas in common with a grown man who knew how to write for the papers."<sup>1</sup> Probably one of the first of the editor's notes given to Harris to be set in type for *The Countryman* (April 29, 1862) was significant:

#### THE RETURN OF THE BIRDS

For a number of years past we have kept a record of the return of the birds that migrate south at the approach of [winter?]. We give here the date of their appearance this spring, as taken from our notebook. [Eight entries follow, as various birds had been first noticed in April.]

Flocking in the woods about the printing office, the birds, along with the squirrels that played on the roof, sometimes afforded the little typesetter his only company. Butterfly became Joe's favorite pony. The harriers were at his command when his work was done in the afternoons. The young negroes were anxious to "run rabbits" with him whenever he chose company. In addition to the sport, there came through *The Countryman*, January 26, 1863, another incentive to learn the ways of animals (and to the boy who was receiving by way of visible return for his work only his board and clothes this was a certain incentive<sup>2</sup>):

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<sup>1</sup>"On the Plantation," Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup>Boston *Globe*, November 3, 1907. James B. Morrow.

FUR WANTED.—I will pay 10 cents apiece for every good rabbit skin delivered at my hat shop; 50 cents for every good coonskin; \$3.00 for every good otter skin; \$5.00 for every beaver skin; and for mink, fox, and muskrat fur in proportion. The animal must be killed between the 15th of October and the 15th of March. J. A. TURNER.

January 26, 1863.

A series of articles on foxes, fox hounds, and fox-hunting was published in *The Countryman* during 1863 and 1864. Mr. Turner was always very fond of fox-hunting. Often parties of friends spent several days as his guests for hunting festivals. Mr. Harris recalls this custom in a chapter of "On the Plantation," entitled "A Georgia Fox Hunt." His realistic accounts of fox hunts written soon after he left Turnwold first indicated his talent in the field of narrative fiction.<sup>1</sup> But while fox-hunting had its excitement, coon- and possum-hunting had their charm. His favorite black companions for this sport had never worked so hard during the day that they were not ready to accompany "Little Marster" at night. Then it was—when the coon was located in his hollow, or the eyes of the possum shined in the tree top, and the old negro began to carry on a conversation with the animal—that Joe Harris captured, along with the possum and the coon, the spirit of the negroes that moves through their animal tales, making easy the way for himself to become the supreme master of his craft.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See later account of his life in Forsyth, Georgia; also Part II.

<sup>2</sup>The old negro's talking to the coon or possum is still a familiar source of fun to those who hunt in the South.

### III

IT now remains to discover what direct literary influences were moving upon Harris during his years on the Turner plantation. Can we find something of his first inclination to write, whether from his observation, study, or imagination, while he was a printer in *The Countryman* office? Did he receive at this time any encouragement and assistance? Did he produce anything worth while during the four years? Happily, we are able to give to each of these questions full answer, based upon detailed and specific evidence.

In all the sketches of Harris that have so far appeared much has been made of his contributions to *The Countryman* signed "Countryman's Devil." As a matter of fact, he did put some things in *The Countryman* over that signature, but they gave little evidence of literary possibilities. Indeed, they were only a series of puns; and the evidence of anything literary about Harris, so far as they are concerned, lies perhaps in the fact that his critical judgment would not allow him to sign his own name. However, it must not be overlooked that he was here finding new expression for that same spirit of fun which was manifest in his boyish pranks already written of. And the successful paragraphist of the next decade was here in the making. A few examples of these efforts at wit, selected from the whole, follow:

Why must Governor Brown's reputation as commander-in-chief of our forces grow less?

Because for all his military reputation he is obliged to Wayne.—*Countryman's Devil*.

Why would it be highly criminal to make C hard in the name of one of the Alabama Confederate senators?

Because Alabama would then be represented in the Senate by a Yankey.

Why would it be criminal to make C soft in the other Alabama senator's name?

Because it would make him Slay, when the Bible says: "Thou shalt not kill."

Why are women opposed to the repeal of the Stay law?

Because a great many of them consider stays their chief support.—*Countryman's Devil*.

Harris found amusement in this way chiefly during his second year (1863) at Turnwold. Other papers that year took notice of his paragraphs. The *Augusta Constitutional*, for instance, carried the following: "Our brother of *The Countryman* has been publishing a number of sharp sayings of late which he uniformly ascribes to 'our devil.'" Whereupon the *Confederate Union* propounds as follows:

Why is the editor of *The Countryman* like the enemy's fleet when they attacked Charleston?

Because he puts his "devil" foremost.

The first piece that appeared in *The Countryman* over his name follows:

#### GRUMBLERS

I was reading yesterday in a very remarkable book which some over-ignorant people aver never existed; but as to whether it exists or not, I leave for the common sense of the reader to judge. The copy of the work which I have before me was procured for me by a friend at a great cost from the Caliph Haroun Al Rascid. The name of the curious book is the "Tellmenow Isitsoornot," written by that justly celebrated Grand Vizier, Hopandgofetchit. The reader will think all this highly nonsensical and, at the same time, foreign to my subject; but, nevertheless, it is necessary that I give some account of this book, as there are but two copies of it in the new world, one of which I own [at] the present period. In this book, beginning on the second page of

Chapter I., will be found a very minute account of the different classes of men. It speaks of grumblers as follows: "These are the delicate morsels of humanity who cannot be pleased, who are so fastidious and dissatisfied that all the world cannot reconcile them to their lot. They grumble at the providence of God." (The reader will bear in mind that I translate *verbatim et literatim*.) "These men who are dissatisfied with the state in which God has placed them," the work goes on to state, "are mostly idlers and vagabonds, though they are formed of all classes—the rich, the poor, the black, the white, and all. These are a distinct race of the genus homo. Their dialect has a monotonous nasal twang, sometimes loud and emphatic, at others low and moaning. Their grammars indicate a frequent use of the pronoun *we* and such interrogations as these: 'What shall we do?' and 'How are we to live such times as these?'" They use such interrogations as these to great redundancy. "The present war" (the war waged by Mahomet?) "has developed their strikingly deformed character. . . . So this race now stands at the head of everything that is remarkable or in the least curious." And to prove how curious and yet how common they are, let me relate a short anecdote. "This race," the book continues, "were first found in the Eastern Hemisphere, and the news of their discovery spread so fast that it reached the barbarians of the Western World in a few days. But before we were aware that the tidings had left our own country, one of the American savages had already landed and was endeavoring to procure a specimen of these 'grumblers' to place in a museum. Burn him" (the writer evidently means Barnum) "soon procured a fine specimen; but as soon as he saw him he turned off with: 'O pshaw! Plenty of them at home!' So you see how common, as well as curious, they are." Here the chapter on grumblers ends, and here my quotation ends. It is highly important that every one should read "Tellmenow Isitsoornot," as it contains many valuable lessons; but as every one cannot procure a copy of it, I shall content myself by occasionally presenting a chapter to the readers of *The Countryman*.

J. C. HARRIS.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, December 15, 1862.

"Grumblers" was published nine months after Harris's arrival at Turnwold, when he had just passed his fourteenth birthday. In addition to showing his inclination to write, it shows an early acquaintance with the "Arabian Nights" and taste for imaginative writing. May we not, too, foresee the mischievous boy of the playground becoming the humorist of literature?

Along with his puns of the next year he contributed several articles that revealed his more sober nature. Two of the longer ones, and the best, are given here.<sup>1</sup> As may be seen elsewhere, there is seen in the first piece evidence of his reading Bryant, and likely he was writing something of his own experience:

#### SABBATH EVENING IN THE COUNTRY

People who live in the crowded cities, as a general thing, have no idea of the beautiful stillness of a Sabbath evening in the country, far away from the bustle and turmoil attendant on city life. In a city one cannot read or worship God as he would choose. He must needs be interrupted; while in the country it is just the reverse. One can go out into the open fields, or glide into the dark foliage of the screening forest, and seat himself at the foot of some cloud-capped vine, and read his Bible or reflect or give utterance to his thoughts in words—hold converse, as it were, with nature's God or listen to the lays of the lark as she ascends heavenward. He can hark to the merry piping of the tree-frog and various other beautiful sounds without fear of being disturbed. He can hear the mournful cadence of the evening zephyr as it whispers its tale of love to the pine tree tops, tossing to and fro, as it mournfully chants the requiem of departing day.

It reminds us of the evening of life, when gently we are swayed to and fro by the hand of time, gently we go down the billowy tide of life, gently we sink into the tomb, all nature chanting our requiem.

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<sup>1</sup>For his other contributions to *The Countryman*, see Part II.



Is it not a beautiful thought to ease us down into the grave, to think that the evening wind sighing among the pines is mourning the death of man? Is it not a comfort to those who have no one to love them—the orphan or the childless widow—to think that God has provided *one* thing to mourn our fall, and that it has been provided ever since the creation of our first parents? J. C. HARRIS.<sup>1</sup>

The other piece, published a few months later, shows his imagination again at free play and may show, too, a familiarity with Poe, possibly with Chivers:

## LOST

Was I dreaming, or was it the shadow of a cloud passing between my barred window and the moon that flitted before my vision? Or was it in reality the form of Eloele? Ah! no; nothing but the phantasm of a grief-stricken and gloomy mind. 'Twas long ago when I knew Eloele—long ago! But I thought I saw her last night as once I saw her in days long past and gone—saw her pass before me as of yore; saw her in her gentle beauty, with her loving blue eyes upon me, with her golden curls floating in the evening breeze, as in auld lang syne.

Yes, I *know* it must have been her; for she beckoned me on, and I tried to clasp her airy form to keep her with me; but something whispered, "*Lost!*" and she was gone.

People come to visit me in my cell and look pityingly on me. They fasten me down to the floor with a cruel chain to keep me quiet, they say; but I would hurt no one—O no! Why do they not tell me of my wife, my Eloele? I would be quiet, very quiet. I have asked them of her, but they say nothing and only shake their heads.

Something tells me she is murdered; and when she comes to me in my slumber she has a cruel gash across her throat and another on her head. But I never struck her! I never inflicted those cruel wounds upon her—O no! I loved her too well for that.

Why *don't* they let her come to me? Because they think

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, February 17, 1863.

me mad? I will not live long; and *then*, if she is dead, I will see her again, and she will be no longer a shadow. But while I live every voice and passing wind will whisper: "*Lost Eloele!*" J. C. HARRIS.<sup>1</sup>

Harris had now been contributing to *The Countryman* for about a year. He had probably drawn no praise or comment from the various papers for his more serious efforts. But he had attracted the attention of one whose words would mean far more to him than any newspaper notoriety. The editor of *The Countryman* had observed his young apprentice with care. In the first place, he was impressed with Harris's performance of the duties to which he had been assigned. Nearly a year had passed, when Christmas brought the editor's employees their first holidays, and Mr. Turner wrote in *The Countryman* of December 22, 1862: "The printers in *The Countryman* office have served the editor and subscribers of this journal faithfully during the present year, and Mr. Wilson and Joe and Jim<sup>2</sup> deserve the thanks of us all. Certainly, then, they ought to have a Christmas holiday." About six months further passed, and the editor wrote of Harris: "The *Confederate Union* is disposed to undervalue the services of *The Countryman's* devil. If it only knew what a smart devil *The Countryman* has, it would not do so. Just ask your 'Jim' about it, Brother Nisbet. He knows 'our devil.'" (*The Countryman*, May 5, 1863.) On September 8, 1863, he made this acknowledgment through *The Countryman*: "We have received from 'J. C. H.' a critique to show that 'Hindoo' is not a rhyme to 'window.'" He followed this with a half-column discussion. However, had Mr. Turner given no further atten-

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, June 30, 1863.

<sup>2</sup>James P. Harrison, a most valuable friend of Harris's later life in Forsyth and in Atlanta.

tion, or attention only of this kind, to the young writer, very little importance could be attached to his literary influence upon Harris. He did not stop here. The older writer, full of experience and skilled by practice, took the younger under private care in a personal effort, by unobtrusive assistance and timely counsel, to develop the talent that had shown itself.

In order to show that Mr. Turner was qualified to recognize literary talent and to aid in its cultivation, something further may be added about his own literary work. Both at the old Phoenix Academy and at Emory College he had been distinguished for his ability to write. Two years before the birth of Harris he had first appeared in print through several articles, signed "Orion," in the *Temperance Banner*, Augusta, Georgia (?). He had for some years been attempting verse and, under the assumed name of Frank Kemble, published in 1847, through James M. Cafferty (?), Augusta, Georgia, a volume entitled "Kemble's Poems." Ten years later "The Discovery of Sir John Franklin and Other Poems," by J. A. Turner, came from the press of S. H. Goetzell & Co., Mobile. He wrote, in addition, a considerable amount of political verse satire. "On the 17th day of July, 1859, I completed," he writes in his "Autobiography," "my poem, 'The Old Plantation,' and wrote the preface to it, having been industriously engaged on the poem for about eighteen months." It was first published in *The Countryman* (1862), and from the press of that paper was issued in pamphlet form. He left in manuscript three long poems—"The Maid of Owyhee," "Jonathan," and "The Nigger: A Satire." In 1848 (the year of Harris's birth) Mr. Turner was a contributor to the *Southern Literary Messenger* and the *Southern Literary Gazette*. Later (1851-53) he wrote miscellaneous articles also for *DeBow's Review*, *Godey's Lady's Book*, *Peterson's Magazine*, the *Southern*

*Record*, *Federal Union*, *Augusta Constitutionalist*, *New York Day Book*, *Spirit of the Times*, etc. As publisher he had much experience. It was in 1848, again, when he was only twenty-two, that he undertook his first magazine, *Turner's Monthly*. It failed after three months' publication at Madison, Georgia. In 1853 Benjamin F. Griffin published for him one number of a second magazine, styled *The Tomahawk*. In 1854-55, while practicing law in Eatonton, Mr. Turner published "a weekly miscellaneous journal," the *Independent Press*, which, says the "Autobiography," "obtained considerable circulation and great popularity, owing to its independent and fearless tone." In 1860, while living at Turnwold, he had published by Pudney & Russell, New York, *The Plantation: A Quarterly Review*, which the war cut off after four numbers. Finally, in 1862, came that wonderful little paper whose "devil" has lent to it immortality. Through its immediate agency Joel Chandler Harris was lifted out of obscurity and drawn into his preparation for fame. It must, therefore, receive distinct attention.

The first issue of *The Countryman* appeared March 4, 1862; the last issue May 8, 1866. Mr. Harris said: "The type was old and worn; and the hand press, a Washington, No. 2, had seen considerable service."<sup>1</sup> But, perhaps to the greater credit of the printers, not an issue of the paper appeared whose print was not clear and general mechanical appearance not neat. The first issue was a sheet folded once, giving four pages, each with four columns eighteen by three inches. Under the vicissitudes of the time, the size varied from four to sixteen pages, with a fluctuating subscription price.<sup>2</sup> The editor had fixed a high ideal for this

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<sup>1</sup>"On the Plantation," page 21.

<sup>2</sup>The changes made in the paper during the four years of its publication were as follows: Volume V., No. 3, four pages and reduced print, on account of the burning of the Bath Paper Factory. Price

journal. This is fully set forth in the prospectus of an early issue (April 15, 1862) and reads:

*The Countryman* is a little paper published on the editor's plantation, nine miles from Eatonton, at one dollar per annum, invariably in advance. We do not profess to publish a newspaper, for, under the circumstances that is impossible. Our aim is to mold our journal after Addison's little paper, *The Spectator*, Steele's little paper, *The Tatler*, Johnson's little papers, *The Rambler* and *The Adventurer*, and Goldsmith's little paper, *The Bee*, neither of which, we believe, was as large as *The Countryman*. It is our aim to fill our little paper with essays, poems, sketches, agricultural articles, and choice miscellany. We do not intend to publish anything that is dull, didactic, or prosy. We wish to make a neatly printed, select little paper, a pleasant companion for the leisure hour, and to relieve the minds of our

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advanced from \$2 to \$3 a year. (There had been a previous advance from \$1 to \$2 a year.) Vol. V., No. 13, return to full sheets, \$3 per annum. Vol. VI., No. 5 (on or before), \$5 per annum. Vol. VI., No. 12, change of motto from "Brevity Is the Soul of Wit" to "Independent in Everything, Neutral in Nothing." Vol. VII., No. 1, W. W. Turner, brother of J. A. Turner, is called in as associate editor. Vol. VII., No. 1, is followed by Vol. IX., No. 1, Vol. X., No. 1, Vol. XI., No. 1, and so on to Vol. XVIII., the volume number being changed each week instead of the issue number. The dates are regular. January 5, 1864, \$10 per annum. Pages doubled after first issue. Vol. XIX., No. 18 (May 3, 1864), \$5 for four months. Vol. XIX., No. 21, drops back to eight pages (lack of paper). Vol. XIX., No. 30, \$5 for three months. Vol. XX., No. 21, \$3 per annum. Size reduced to four pages. Vol. XX., No. 23, Motto, "Independent in Nothing, Neutral in Everything." Just at this time (June, 1865) Mr. Turner was placed under military arrest and put under such restrictions in publication that the paper was suspended between June 27, 1865, and January 30, 1866. Vol. XXI., No. 1 (January 30, 1866), motto, "Devoted to the Editor's Opinions." \$2 per annum. Vol. XXI., No. 3, \$3 per annum. Vol. XXI., No. 15 (May 8, 1866), last issue. Vol. I., Nos. 12, 13, 14, Vol. II., Nos. 3, 7, 8, and Vol. XIX., No. 24, are missing from Mr. Harris's file.

people somewhat from the engrossing topic of war news. Write the following address in full: J. A. TURNER, Turnwold, Putnam County, Georgia.

He had earlier taken his entire first page for a discussion of little papers, with especial reference to Steele, Addison, Goldsmith, Johnson, Washington Irving, and James K. Paulding. He was extremely anxious to make his, too, a little paper that would be preserved as permanent literature. The contents might be matter written immediately for the paper, or it might be something carefully selected from various sources. For example, in the eighth issue (April 22, 1862) there appears an article on "De La Rochefoucauld," from D'Israeli's account of Rochefoucauld in "Curiosities of Literature," followed by the editor's statement of his intention to "lay before our readers many of the maxims of the noble French author," the truth to be embraced, the error rejected by the reader's own judgment. While it was not possible to keep the contents of the paper literary to the full extent of the editor's desire, each issue carried much of more than temporary worth. It is exceedingly interesting to know that in what turned out to be the last issue of *The Countryman* Mr. Turner began to publish an English grammar of his own construction. The front page of the issue of March 18, 1862, was used for the editor's review of Dickens's "Hard Times." The same issue carried a full column on Chaucer. Some other of his personal contributions have already been noted. His interest in a distinctly Southern literature is seen constantly. *The Countryman* of February 14, 1865, publishes a list of about one hundred Southern poets. April 1, 1862, appeared Henry Timrod's "A Cry to Arms," with this editorial comment: "We copy the . . . spirited lines from the *Charleston Courier*. They have no superiors in English nor in any other language."

February 13 and March 13, 1866, Edgar Allan Poe was under discussion, with particular reference to the ill-received Griswold's "Life of Poe." *The Countryman* prospectus, September 13, 1864, declares the editor's desire in this paper to revive Nile's *Register*, having as an additional feature "a department of elegant literature, rejecting the style of the Yankee literary journals and modeling itself after the best English miscellaneous weeklies, but, at the same time, being stamped with an independent Southern tone original with and peculiar to itself." At another time (*The Countryman*, Vol. II., No. 1) he wrote: "So few Southern literary or miscellaneous journals succeed. But it is absolutely necessary that the Southern people should have these kinds of journals." In the issue of September 29, 1862, we read: "With the beginning of the third volume of this journal its form is changed, so as to make it more convenient for binding." To this purpose an additional fold was made, giving the page a size nine by twelve inches. How anxious was this ambitious man to have his publication preserved! This was his final effort in behalf of Southern literature. When this effort had bravely spent itself, and he realized that he must soon give up publishing *The Countryman*, he wrote in its columns of February 13, 1866:

Scarcely any one has been a more industrious writer than I, and scarcely any one has made greater sacrifices for Southern literature than I. I have not only expended large sums of money in the cause; but while I might have made a fortune, perhaps, by falling into the Yankee style of literature, and might have gained notoriety, if not fame, at the hands of the Yankee critics by pandering to their vicious tastes, I refused to make money and accept such fame in order to remain *peculiarly* and *entirely* Southern.

Such was the character of *The Countryman*, and the tremendously stimulative influence that his intimate connection

with it exerted upon Harris was greater than can be well understood to-day. The typesetter at the modern linotype machine does his work mechanically, with often a stupefying effect upon his mind, so far as the matter before him is concerned. But very different, surely, was the effect upon the mind of young Harris as he sat, sometimes alone, at his case in the quiet little plantation printing shop, studying the learned matter contained in the voluminous editorial manuscript and reflecting upon the selections from standard literature marked for him to set in type for the paper. He took time to think; to chuckle over the paragraphs, complimentary and otherwise, that passed back and forth between the editor of *The Countryman* and other editors; to develop his critical ability as his eye ran over the contributions proffered by ambitious writers from the country around; to form his own picture of the war and draw his own conclusions as he followed the weekly letters from correspondents at the battle front. He knew each week everything that was in the paper, coming soon to take a proprietary interest in it and to measure the various exchanges by it as standard. His affection for the paper appears in a note written with pencil on the margin of the last issue, carefully preserved to the end of his life:

This is the *very last* number of *The Countryman* ever issued. I mean this is the last paper printed; and it was printed by my hand May 9, 1866. It was established March 4, 1862, having lived four years, two months, and four days.  
J. C. HARRIS.<sup>1</sup>

From the record of Mr. Turner's creative work in literature, it is clear that he was abundantly able to teach a young writer. And we are not left merely to imagine that he personally instructed Harris. One of the most valuable results

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<sup>1</sup>Paper in possession of Mrs. Harris.



of the present research was accomplished when there was found, in Mr. Turner's own handwriting, dated when Harris had been with him two years and had yet two years of apprenticeship, a note that bespeaks the relationship of teacher and pupil as follows:

For the first time since you sent in this article I have found time to examine it; and though it has merit, I regret that I have to reject it, because it is not up to the standard of *The Countryman*.

In the first place, you have made a bad selection in the article you have chosen for a subject. That article is contemptible and beneath criticism. Captain Flash did his paper injustice in publishing it.

In the next place, there is want of unity and condensation in your article. It is headed "Irishmen: Tom Moore," and then goes off on a great variety of subjects, and is too diffuse on everything it touches.

In writing hereafter, first select a good, worthy subject; second, stick to that subject; and, third, say what you have to say in as few words as possible. Study the "nervous condensation" which you so much admire in Captain Flash.

All this is for your good.

J. A. TURNER<sup>1</sup>

August 21, 1864.

The first sentence of this note shows that whatever Harris wrote—for *The Countryman*, at least—passed under Mr. Turner's supervision and at times received his specific criticism. We are fortunate in having this note that accompanied a rejected article. It shows that Mr. Turner was not the man to accept whatever came from the pen of his protégé. Such an attitude on his part would have been, as he well knew, poison to the young writer. But how was he to avoid discouraging forever one whose fearful sensitiveness char-

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<sup>1</sup>This note was found loose among various old papers in one of Mr. Harris's scrapbooks in the possession of Mrs. Harris.

acterized him from his earliest days?<sup>1</sup> This note exhibits that splendid tact which during the four years must have wrought unfailing effect upon Harris. First, he places the burden of the trouble on the subject selected, rather than on the article itself; then he tells just where the article is weak in composition; then, constructively, he suggests three definite principles for all writing and joins hands with the young writer on the principle of "nervous condensation," which Harris had already discovered. In a manner of parental affection he closes with: "All this is for your good." We are to understand the spirit of confidence and thankful gratitude in which this instruction from the older writer was received from the fact that until this day the note here quoted is preserved in a precious old scrapbook of Mr. Harris's. But had the rejection of the article given offense, palliation was to follow through a complimentary paragraph from the editor in *The Countryman* of the next week August 30, 1864:

WHY IS IT?

That gentleman (we forget his name) who is writing some articles for the Raleigh *Mercury* on the literature of the South does not give proper credit when credit is due. In his notice of Henry Lynden Flash he uses pretty freely an article of our young correspondent, Joel C. Harris, and yet never gives that correspondent the credit which is his due.

The editor in his own composition, too, set an example for his pupil. Says he: "We read our own proof—reading and re-reading, revising and re-revising."<sup>2</sup> Here was a writer not under the necessity of abiding by the original

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Harris, in a personal letter to Mrs. Georgia Starke, once wrote with deep pathos of the painful sensitiveness with which he had always been afflicted. See this letter on page 95.

<sup>2</sup>*The Countryman*.

copy. Being proprietor and publisher, as well as editor, he made every change and revision that judgment, taste, and fancy might suggest. And Harris, having set up in type the first copy, carried the proof to the editor's study,<sup>1</sup> where, as the latter read, marked, and revised, the pupil could well-nigh see the master's mental processes. How with a most commendable curiosity he must have returned to the quiet little shop and studied the results of the editor's latest revisions! Mr. Turner's brother, the associate editor, also assisted the young man. Among Mr. Harris's books is an old, well-worn copy of the twentieth edition of Parker's "Aids to English Composition," marked "William W. Turner to J. C. Harris."

A good library was the one thing needed to complete the equipment for literary training at Turnwold. It was at hand, above a thousand well-chosen books, one of the valuable private libraries of the time.<sup>2</sup> Having, in a way, graduated from the smaller libraries of his Eatonton friends, Harris now found provided for him books of all kinds and times. And at his side was his eager guardian fully competent and more than willing to guide his reading.<sup>3</sup> We have already seen how the "Arabian Nights" had taken his fancy from the first. Grimm's "Fairy Tales," too, was a companion favorite. It was no surprise after his death to find in the library of his own home that the most worn book was "Mother Goose's Rhymes and Fairy Tales." It was such matter in books that sank deep into this boy's mind along with the tales listened to in the negro cabins. Mr. Wallace P. Reed, doubtless from conversation with Mr. Harris, writes that Elizabethan literature became the general field

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<sup>1</sup>"On the Plantation."

<sup>2</sup>Most of this library is still kept by the Turner family.

<sup>3</sup>Mrs. Harris confirms this assertion.

of his early interest.<sup>1</sup> During these years, when his mind was most impressible and memory strongest, he became familiar with the best authors and developed an abiding taste for such reading. So was he preparing to be in after years literary critic for the *Atlanta Constitution*. And, despite his lack of formal training in the schools, he was absorbing those excellencies of style and diction that characterize his own writing.

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<sup>1</sup>"Literature," October 27, 1888. W. P. Reed.

#### IV

THAT Mr. Harris took advantage of his opportunities and made steady progress under Mr. Turner's tutelage is shown by the increase in number and advance in quality of his contributions to *The Countryman*. Like his teacher, Mr. Harris early attempted poetry; but in later life he declared his efforts were only doggerel. The influence of Poe, again, seems to appear in the first two poems that follow. The third is given to show his experimentation with the sonnet. The last is quite possibly a tribute to his mother, whose name was Mary. "Minnie Grey," too, may be a tribute to Mr. Turner's eldest daughter, who died in February, 1864.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Turner, in his poem, "The Old Plantation," himself honored his little idol, Anne Watson, by calling Turnwold "Glen Wattie."<sup>2</sup>

#### MOSELLE<sup>3</sup>

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

I read your name upon this stone,  
And, weeping, I deplore  
That the Fate that made you proud and rich  
Should have made me proud and poor.

I dreamed to-day that I roamed again  
In a bright sun-lighted dell;

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<sup>1</sup>Harris's contributions to *The Countryman* were sometimes written long before their publication, as is shown by the date occasionally given with his signature.

<sup>2</sup>"The Old Plantation," J. A. Turner. (Published in *The Countryman*, 1862, and in pamphlet form.)

<sup>3</sup>*The Countryman*, February 20, 1866.

*The Life of Joel Chandler Harris*

Alas for the dreamer's waking sigh!  
Alas for the dream, Moselle!

I dreamed that you and I were wed,  
And the dream seemed all so true;  
And O what a happy thing it was  
To be beloved by you!

Your raven hair was just as dark,  
Your eye had just the gleam,  
As when we met in the long ago;  
I'm sure *that* was no dream.

You said you loved me then, I know,  
While your bosom rose and fell;  
Alas for the boy that happy heard!  
Alas for the past, Moselle!

Ah! you were rich, and I was poor,  
And the poor are born to sigh;  
But alas for the rich or poor who weep  
When the vows of a woman die!

I've often wondered how it is  
That hearts are bought and sold;  
But surely yours was bought, Moselle,  
With the gray-beard miser's gold.

I was not dreaming when I heard  
Your happy marriage bell.  
Alas for your husband's doting pride!  
And alas for mine, Moselle!

I celebrate that bitter day  
Through all the growing years,  
And bow me low in the evening gloom  
To keep the day with tears.

In *promising* once you cheated me,  
And in *giving* you cheated him;

And the phantom of love is haunting us both  
With features pale and dim.

You loved *me* well enough, I know ;  
But your love for *him* was sold ;  
And you wore your husband's wedding ring  
Because the ring was gold.

Your gray-beard lover was deceived in you,  
For he thought you loved him well.  
Alas for the blinded eyes of love !  
And alas for mine, Moselle !

. . . . .  
In journeying on with Memory  
Among our former years,  
A phantom promise hides itself  
In a heavy mist of tears.

Those tears were shed by me, Moselle,  
When we parted long ago ;  
And you made a promise then that you  
Would live for me, you know.

. . . . .  
I heard the ghoul-like sexton sound  
Your solemn funeral knell,  
But it jarred not my heart with so much pain  
As did your marriage bell.

They say you died of a broken heart,  
That you called and called for me,  
And your husband hobbled from off his chair  
And stood where you could see.

But lovers all must part, you know,  
And all must say, "Farewell."  
Alas for the pale lips speaking it !  
And alas for mine, Moselle !

OUR MINNIE GREY<sup>1</sup>

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

We cozily sit around the hearth  
And chat on a winter day,  
But sad sighs check our smiling mirth  
As we think of our Minnie Grey.

For she was the pride of our fond hearts;  
How we loved her none can tell.  
We might wear black for the youthful dead,  
But a tear does just as well.

It seemed to us as if no cloud  
Could come with its dismal shade  
Where with prattling talk and laughter loud  
Our darling Minnie played.

But the cloud did come in the shape of Death,  
And we heard his stern voice say:  
"Ye are too happy here with her;  
I want your Minnie Grey."

And so she closed her loving eyes  
And folded her hands so white  
Meekly across her pure young breast  
And slept with Christ that night.

So now we sit around the hearth  
And wait for a coming day  
When we may leave this dreary earth  
And live with our Minnie Grey.

TURNWOLD, GEORGIA.

NATURE<sup>2</sup>

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

I see the dark old woods their heads uprear,  
Standing embattled against the deep blue sky.  
Their fauns—almost see them sporting by,  
And hear the dryads whispering softly near.

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, March 6, 1866. <sup>2</sup>*The Countryman*, March 13, 1866.



Feronia's oracles I almost hear  
Mingling their deep tones with the zephyr's sigh.  
An echo's voice in sportive mimic cry  
Comes down the hill to rouse the feeding deer.  
Up through the woodland to the mountain's brow,  
Down in the valley, o'er the sweeping plains,  
Where ne'er hath been the devastating plow—  
'Tis here, and here alone, that Nature reigns;  
And when we come, our stubborn knee must bow  
And bend to her within her woody fanes.

TURNWOLD, GEORGIA, 1864.

MARY<sup>1</sup>

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

Though other lips shall tell their love  
In softer strains than mine,  
Though prouder forms deceitful bend  
And bow at Cupid's shrine—  
Turn, Mary, from their empty vows  
To one whose *heart* is thine.

Like echoes of the mermaid's sigh  
Or of the ocean's swell,  
Which poets say forever hide  
Within the bright sea shell,  
Thy image in my inmost heart  
Will ever fondly dwell.

Thou art my thoughts each weary day,  
My dreaming all the night,  
And still I see thy gentle smile  
And hear thy footstep light—  
But tears are gathering in my eyes;  
I cannot see to write.

TURNWOLD, GEORGIA.

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, March 13, 1866.

From his last year's prose contributions two are given. "Christmas" bespeaks his love of children and anticipates his Chapter VIII., "Something about Sandy Claus," in "On the Plantation."<sup>1</sup> And in this connection it will be remembered how he would never tell tales to his children nor to any others, because then they would look up to him, he said, and he could no longer be as he wished always to be—one of them.<sup>2</sup> "Macaria" is at once the best evidence found of his contact with contemporary literature and of his own best writing for *The Countryman*. It was his first effort at critical literary review, which was in the days of his maturity to be a regular feature of his editorial work for the *Atlanta Constitution*.<sup>3</sup>

### CHRISTMAS<sup>8</sup>

There is an invisible chain connecting all my ideas of happiness with Christmas. It is with a kind of religious awe, a half-subdued feeling of enthusiasm, that I look forward to each successive return of the anniversary of the birth of our Saviour.

From time immemorial the return of his birth nights has been celebrated with a succession of holidays and festivals. In the olden times the yule log was burned amid dancing and joy, the maidens were crowned with myrtle and holly, the branch of mistletoe was hung in the middle of the room, and all gave themselves up to innocent mirth.

With the idea of Christmas comes a vision of the bright-eyed St. Nicholas—or Santa Claus, as the children call him—that merry old sprite with his tiny reindeer and toy sleigh. How he loves the children! What trouble he takes to bring them good things from his ice-bound home! And the children, how they dream of the good things in store for them!

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<sup>1</sup>See Harris's contributions to the *Atlanta Constitution* in Part II.

<sup>2</sup>Oral statement of Mrs. Harris.

<sup>3</sup>*The Countryman*, February 20, 1866.

What a pity that children ever grow up to be men and women! What a pity that reason tears to pieces the time-honored legend of St. Nicholas! As for me, I have always held on to my childish belief in the existence of the good old elf with a tenacity that defied reason. I would not give up that one belief for all the philosophy in the world. Nothing can shake it. Why, my grandmother used to hang up her stocking with my own and say that it was the only way she could call up the faces of her dead children and remembrances of her dear friends. And when we rose and found the good things awaiting us and the marks upon the back of the chimney, where good old Santa Claus came down in the dead hours of the night, it was hard to tell which was the most overjoyed, my grandmother or myself.

It quite awed my childish fancy, I confess, to *see* the evidence of St. Nicholas upon the chimney back, and it is no wonder that this fact quite overcame all my doubts. I like to see grown-up people relying upon these traditions of their childhood. It is evidence that at least a portion of their hearts remains untainted and uncorrupted by the world. Such an example of childish faith is worth all the cold reasoning of philosophy. Not only do I still retain my belief in the legend of St. Nicholas, but I go further. I have, in my own mind, personified Santa Claus with Christ himself; and who will dare to impeach my religion? It is not difficult, I opine, to imagine the form of our Saviour descending upon earth at the anniversary of his birth and scattering his blessings among little children whom he loves. It is easy to imagine, I say, the form of our Saviour gliding about from house to house, the palace and the cottage, through the dim mists of midnight, giving his little lambs a token that he *was* near them, leaning over the couches of the infants, perchance kissing them and repeating the words spoken by him one thousand years ago: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

God bless the little ones who believe in Santa Claus, and a merry Christmas to them all!

J. C. H.

December 25, 1865.

*"MACARIA"*<sup>1</sup>

Several years ago the author of "Macaria," Miss Augusta J. Evans, of Mobile, wrote "Beulah." Critics were profuse in their laudations of this work, some of them going so far as to compare it to "Jane Eyre." Their admiration of the book was well grounded. "Beulah" is, indeed, a work of which any author might justly be proud, surpassing many of the standard English and American novels. The plot was connected, the characters well supported, and the whole story grand and thrilling. It being Miss Evans's first work, the critics and the reading public generally very naturally expected in her next work something better—more mature, if I be allowed so to speak.

After a long silence the distinguished authoress again condescends to favor her friends with a work entitled "Macaria; or, The Altar of Sacrifice."

For the benefit of those who have not perused this work I wish to dissect several of the more prominent chapters of "Macaria." The authoress opens her story with a description of her hero, Russell Aubrey. This character is an ambitious youth, who has to contend with the odium of his father's name, who died upon the gallows, as well as several minor difficulties and misfortunes. This character is well supported throughout the narrative, though the reader cannot help thinking that all the more refined and tender feelings of Aubrey's nature are swallowed up in his desire to win in his thirst after fame. His ambition, in many places, is made to appear selfish—that is, he desires fame merely as a vehicle by which to revenge himself upon those who have calumniated his own and his father's name. A selfish ambition never accomplishes any noble end. This being known to every reader, the character of Russell Aubrey appears smaller in our estimation than otherwise it would.

The heroine, Irene Huntingdon, is not so well drawn, though better supported as a character than Aubrey. Sometimes she assimilates to Beulah, and again she is like no one; sometimes a mere woman with a woman's heart and feeling, and sometimes as cold and calm as the

Pallid bust of Pallas—

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<sup>1</sup>*The Countryman*, January 24, 1865.

a living contradiction of herself, as well as the contradiction of the feelings natural to a woman. Having formed the standard of right peculiar to her peculiarities, of course she bases many of her actions upon incorrect principles. At one time she disobeys her father where it was right that she should obey him. And, again, she obeys him with a tenacity altogether unnatural to any person, where everything goes to show that his commands are the result of mere prejudice and malice, where every principle of nature rebels against it, and even where instinct and Holy Writ teach her that she is right and her father wrong. I allude to her father's hatred of Russell Aubrey and his wishes that Irene and Russell should never meet, leaving marriage out of the question. They do meet, however, at a ball. Irene leaves the ball to administer to the sick. Russell follows her to the the domiciles of "poverty, hunger, and dirt" and confesses love for her. Although Irene adores him, she listens as coolly as if she were a statue instead of a woman and, when he has done, tells him that she is a friend to him, but henceforth their paths widely diverge. This is an unnatural, heartless scene. About this time the "clarion of war" resounds throughout the South. Russell Aubrey organizes a company, is chosen captain, and prepares to enter service. Irene learns the facts and indites Captain Aubrey a note to the effect that she wishes to see him. He attends her summons, and Irene confesses her love for him. If this scene is not indelicate, it is certainly unwomanly. Though she confesses her love for Russell, she has no idea of marrying him and tells him again that they must occupy very different spheres in life.

Mr. Huntingdon, Irene's father, goes to war and in one of the first battles gets killed. Irene henceforth devotes her life to administering to the wants of the sick and wounded soldiers. Here occurs one of the most beautiful, heart-touching scenes I ever read. A sick youth who was wounded in battle is put under Irene's care. Being delirious, the boy imagines her to be his mother. Let the reader peruse the following extract:

" 'I have not said my prayers to-night. Mother, hold my musket a minute.'

"He put out his arm as if to consign it to her care and folded his hands together.

" 'Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name'—His voice sank to a whisper, inaudible for some seconds, then he paused as if confused. . . .

" 'Jessie knows it all; I don't.' Then came, indistinctly, snatches of the infant prayer which had been taught him at his truckle-bed in the nursery.

"After a short silence he shivered and murmured :

" 'Corporal of the guard, post No. 9! Mother, it is cold standing guard to-night, but the relief will soon be round. Standing guard—mother'—

"His eyes wandered around the dim room, then slowly closed as he fell into sleep that knows no earthly waking."

Such scenes as the above find an echo in every bosom—so natural, so touching! It does honor to the feelings of Miss Evans's heart.

While Irene is engaged in attending the wants of the sick soldiers Russell Aubrey is mortally wounded. As soon as she hears of his misfortune Irene hastens to him, and he dies with her arms about him. Why did not Miss Evans cause Russell to marry Irene on his deathbed? There is something so solemn and impressive in a deathbed marriage!

The character of Electra Grey is by far the best drawn in Miss Evans's book, though, when compared with "Beulah," it is but a feeble imitation. Why do Miss Evans's characters deal so much in the doctrine of the mystics?

That "Macaria" is a great novel I will not pretend to deny; but that it is not at all comparable with "Beulah" every candid reader will admit. "Macaria" will never be a popular novel, for the reason that the mass of readers will not understand her classical allusions; and but few, I ween, will define with her the æsthetics of politics and religion. If Miss Evans is not actually pedantic, she is certainly obscure. For instance, how many readers will understand such language as the following? "Perish the microcosm in the limitless macrocosm and sink the feeble earthly segregate in the boundless, rushing, choral aggregation!" And even when the reader has found the meaning of the "hard

words," their connection with what goes before is so indistinctly seen he does not know how to apply the sentences.

Miss Evans has been compared to Madame de Staël. Though she says herself that perhaps once in a thousand years a Corinne might be found, it is doubtful if she will ever be found in one day. And I agree with her. If Corinne ever visits us, it will be in her imbecility.

The authoress of "Macaria," through her characters, advances some very specious points with regard to our future independence. She advances the idea that either slavery or home manufactures should be done away with and is an advocate of free trade. This would be glorious. Dependent independence! Miss Evans looks aghast at what she terms the "gross utilitarianism" of the age. She forgets that even religion is utilitarian, and that instead of our people being gross utilitarians they are only in favor of *utile cum dulce* (the useful with the agreeable). Everything is liable to progress, and utilitarianism is only another word for improvement. I am not in favor of that improvement which would subject the "falls of Niagara to turning a mill"; but I am for the *utile cum dulce*, and God grant that our people may never make true that proverb which has been such a curse to Italy, "*Dolce far niente*"!

Miss Evans's political disquisitions are just what one would expect of a woman—weak and diffuse. And if she does not pointedly suggest an oligarchy, she is certainly in favor of an aristocracy. I have always thought a woman's opinions and suggestions with regard to politics were superfluous, that it savored too much of the Puritan strong-minded females. Let women, instead of giving their opinions in State affairs, personally instill correct principles into the minds of their sons, whom they may "raise up to the councils of the nation."

J. C. H.

Mr. Turner found comfort in the progress that he observed in the literary efforts of his apprentice. In the words last quoted from him, giving an account of his efforts in behalf of Southern literature, we read the realization of the fact that his own efforts have reached their limits. He has done what he could and must leave to others the task at

which he has labored. Joel Harris was one to whom he looked as a future writer for the South. It now seems prophetic when he laid one hand on a promising young girl and the other on Harris, saying to them: "You will do the writing for the South that I shall be unable to do." Flip-pant and insignificant to some may seem the young man's answer to the question that came a little later from the young lady, but others may read therein the modesty and humor characteristic of the future author. "What are you going to write about, Joe," she asked. "Bumblebees and jay birds," he seemed to mumble.

Harris responded with all the fire of youth to the inspiring call of his teacher. He became exceedingly zealous in the work of building up a Southern literature. He, too, decried the dependence of nearly all writers and publishers in the South and their poor imitation of "Yankee standards." As the weeks passed he marked the content and spirit of the numerous publications that came to *The Countryman* office. Book reviews, and occasionally new books themselves, thus reached him. His review of "Macaria" has been given. With strong feeling he opens a brief review of Griswold's "Poe" in these words: "One of the most miserably gotten-up affairs, perhaps, that ever intruded itself upon the reading public of America was Griswold's 'Biography of Edgar Allan Poe,' affixed to the works of that lamented genius." He concludes: "Upon the whole, it is to be regretted that the writing of Poe's biography fell into the hands of Griswold; and I hope even yet that we may have an edition of the works of that great genius honorable alike to his memory and to us, an honest people.—J. C. H.<sup>2</sup> Thus it was, with some acquaintance of his own with the periodicals and books

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. B. W. Hunt (*née* Louise Prudden), of Eatonton, who tells this incident.

<sup>2</sup>*The Countryman*, February 13, 1866.



issued from the American press, that he began to write literary criticisms along with the editor. And the creative impulse also had moved him, so that he was no longer merely devil, but also regular contributor to the plantation paper. Nor was there space sufficient in this paper for him to do all that he had an ambition to attempt for Southern literature. His vision was extended, and, with the realization of his growing powers, he began to offer contributions to other publications, as seen in the following letters:<sup>1</sup>

COUNTRYMAN OFFICE,  
TURNWOLD (NEAR EATONTON), GEORGIA,  
June 2, 1863.

Editors *Commonwealth*.

Sirs: I send you an article for the *Commonwealth*, which, if you see fit, publish; otherwise burn it up. On no account let my name be known.

Hoping that you may soon receive a thousand reams of nice paper (which is the best wish that any newspaper can receive nowadays), I remain,

Your friend,

J. C. HARRIS.

P. S.—I have an original tale for the *Commonwealth* entitled "A Night's Hunt." Must I send it? J. C. HARRIS.

EATONTON, GEORGIA, October 25.

Editor *Illustrated Mercury*.<sup>2</sup>

I am anxious for the *Mercury* to succeed, as I believe it is the only publication extant in the South, with the exception of *The Countryman*, which does not model itself after the vile publications of the North—as, for instance, the *Farm and Fireside*. I am afraid also that our Southern writers are giving way to the wholesale imitation of Yankee authors, especially the younger portion of those afflicted with *cacoëthes scribendi*. . . . [He will write articles to help the

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<sup>1</sup>Letters found among papers in the possession of Mrs. Harris. There is good reason to believe that he sent verses and prose pieces to several Southern papers whose files are not available.

<sup>2</sup>Probably published at Raleigh, North Carolina.

*Mercury.*] I hope you may succeed in all your endeavors to establish an undefiled Southern literature.

JOEL C. HARRIS.

But had Harris never gotten beyond this sectional animosity, his literary work would have been dwarfed. Had he never come to feel an inspiration deeper than sectional jealousy, his work would have been ignoble. Had Mr. Turner gone no further than to implant sectional bitterness in the writing of his pupil, we should be very ungrateful to him. However, the unpleasant and unworthy in his sectional feeling was, of course, soon to pass away. It took but a short time for the brilliant young man to find himself. Nor in doing so was it necessary for him to turn his back upon his teacher, who was impetuous, but wise withal. In the first fire of his youth he had been moved too much merely by the slaveholder's hatred for the Yankee in Mr. Turner's declarations for Southern literature. But Mr. Turner had, underneath his bitterness, proclaimed the fundamental principle upon which this literature must be created. And before Uncle Remus was able to become a citizen of the literary world, Mr. Harris had penetrated the thin surface of hatred and pride veiling Mr. Turner's thought to grasp this underlying principle. On December 22, 1862, one week after the young apprentice had made his first contribution to *The Countryman*, Mr. Turner published the following editorial:

I do emphatically wish us to have a Southern literature. And prominent in our books I wish the negro placed. The literature of any country should be a true reflex in letters of the manners, customs, institutions, and local scenery of that country. Hence when our authors write I don't believe they ought to run off to Greece, Rome, the Crusades, England, or France for things for their pens. Let them write about things at home and around them. We may talk about Southern literature until doomsday; but so long as everything we write is based upon English and Yankee models,

so long we shall have no Southern literature. Our books and journals should be the outgrowth of the vigorous, manly Southern mind and habit of thought.

Here, indeed, was outlined distinctly and completely Harris's great literary work. How often in conversation he heard these same convictions expressed by the editor we can only imagine. It is not at all unlikely that when he had made his home in Forsyth and again in Savannah and finally in Atlanta, following in the steps of Mr. Turner as an editor, he reviewed again and again the file of *The Countryman* that he had carefully and affectionately preserved. And this earliest editorial on Southern literature must have remained firm in his memory and active in his thought, for again and again the same doctrine echoes through his own editorials in the *Atlanta Constitution*.<sup>1</sup> And not the Uncle Remus matter alone, but also practically everything that he wrote after his maturity, bespeaks its source. Indeed, his material was drawn almost wholly from his own observation of life in and near old Putnam County.<sup>2</sup> Rockville,<sup>3</sup> Shady Dale, and Hillsborough, for instance, appear on the map, so named, to-day; and it is easy to identify Halcyondale and many other places with only their fanciful names to obscure them. Likewise his characters often bear their true names—"Deomotari" ("On the Plantation"), for example—while others are thinly veiled. His fiction everywhere is true interpretation. Of most of his books Harris might have written as he did of "Plantation Pageants": "Glancing

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<sup>1</sup>For example, November 30, 1879, "Literature in the South," and January 25, 1880, "Provinciality in Literature." See later quotations, and compare March 4, 1880, review of "The Georgians, in Part II.

<sup>2</sup>See Part II. and quotation from J. T. Manry, page 87.

<sup>3</sup>This name has lately been usurped by another community near to the earlier one.

back over its pages, it seems to be but a patchwork of memories and fancies, a confused dream of old times."<sup>1</sup>

It is the crowning glory of Mr. Turner's association with Harris to have implanted in the mind of the young writer the principle of literature that became the implicit guide of his genius, leading it in later years to its own splendid expression.

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<sup>1</sup>"Plantation Pageants," the closing paragraph.

## V

**I**NFLUENCES that bore upon Harris at Eatonton and at Turnwold have been clearly discovered. In Eatonton his love of nature had manifested itself; and, despite the humble circumstances under which he was born, his intellectual life had been awakened before he had reached his teens. On the plantation he learned negroes, animals, and children, especially in their association. By precept and example Mr. Turner taught him to write, through his library taught him to read with profit, and by throwing open to him the columns of *The Countryman* stimulated his efforts at original composition. Mr. Turner had gone so far as to point out to him the literary way that he should take. But it was Harris's own genius that determined what should be the significance of his journey. Mr. Turner wrote nothing of importance for publication after the downfall of the Confederacy, which drew from him a sad farewell to his readers in the last issue of *The Countryman*,<sup>1</sup> and two years later (1868) he died broken-hearted in poverty. Harris had left Turnwold to enter upon a decade of hard work and quiet study, after which—accidentally, he says,<sup>2</sup> but naturally and distinctively—he took his place among men of letters.

*The Countryman* ceased after the issue of May 8, 1866. Joë Harris was eighteen years old, and his apprenticeship as

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<sup>1</sup>"The Editor's Adieu," May 8, 1866. Contributions to *Scott's Monthly* later.

<sup>2</sup>*Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, April, 1866 (Vol. XXXVII., pages 417-420), "An Accidental Author." Joel Chandler Harris. (Literary autobiography.)

typesetter was completed. He must now break more entirely away from home and among strangers try his ability. Two years earlier he had been anticipating removal from Turnwold. His friend Williams had at that time replied to a letter from him as follows: *Atlanta*

COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, February 25, 1864.

Yours dated February 14th. . . . You say you want work down here. I should be delighted if you would come, as I am bored to death with the society with which I am compelled to associate. The boys are clever (in the American sense of the word) enough, but, with a few exceptions, stupid woodenheads. . . . [No opening just then.] You can get a "sit" in Macon, no doubt; but you will have to work, work all the time, day and night, and you will soon get tired of it. . . . I remain

Truly your friend,

Whatever may have been the circumstances, *and did much to help* it was to Macon that Harris went when the occasion for a change of his residence now came. He was employed as typesetter for the Macon *Telegraph* for three or four months. His card of membership in the printers' union is preserved and reads:

MACON TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION, No. 6

MACON, GEORGIA, August 7, 1866.

Mr. J. C. Harris has paid dues and fines to date and is entitled to work in any fair office until November 1, 1866, when this permit must be renewed.

(\$2.50.)

JAMES H. SMITH, *Rec. Sec.*

Nothing is known of any literary work on his part during these months. But Macon was the home of Sidney Lanier, and it is quite certain that Harris made use of his opportunity to learn at first hand something of this rising figure among Southern literary men. In a letter of April, 1868, he wrote:

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<sup>1</sup>W. F. Williams. Letter in Mr. Harris's scrapbook.

Sidney and Clifford Lanier are brothers, born and raised in Macon, Georgia. . . . [Sidney] is the most accomplished flute player in America. There is something weird and mysterious, ravishing and entrancing in his manner of playing. It is absolutely impossible for me to describe it to you. One of his descriptions of flute-playing in "Tiger Lilies" comes near telling it, but you should hear him to appreciate. He is a good, modest young man, charming in manner.<sup>1</sup>

That Harris was reading and alert as to literary affairs is shown by the presence to-day among his books of the fourth number of the first volume of the *Crescent Monthly* (October, 1866), marked: "J. C. Harris, Telegraph Office, Macon, Ga." Within a month or two he had secured a position as secretary to Mr. Evelyn, editor of the magazine just mentioned. The *Crescent Monthly* was published by William Evelyn & Co., New Orleans (William B. Smith & Co., Raleigh, North Carolina) as a "magazine of literature, science, art, and society, . . . gotten up in the style of the London *Society Magazine*." The editor was an Englishman, an eccentric character, whom Harris did not learn to love. But as his secretary the young man came to have more than the ordinary reader's interest in the contributors, who were prominent literary figures—L. Q. C. Lamar, Paul Hamilton Hayne, Henry Timrod, John Esten Cooke, Augusta Evans. He was, indeed, now occupying something of an official position in a literary world. It was here that he came into pleasant association with H. L. Flash, whose "nervous condensation" in style he had earlier learned to admire.<sup>2</sup> His own writing, too, was continued, verses being published often anonymously in the New Orleans papers.<sup>3</sup> The credit for some of his best work, patiently done, was

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<sup>1</sup>Charles A. Pilsbury, in (Southern) *Home Journal*.

<sup>2</sup>See page 50.

<sup>3</sup>Charles A. Pilsbury, as above.

stolen from him by another man, according to Sam Small.<sup>1</sup> For the first day of the new year 1867 he had prepared the following stanzas, which appeared in the New Orleans *Sunday Times*:

THE OLD AND THE NEW<sup>2</sup>

I

Clasp hands with those who are going,  
Kiss the lips that are raised to be kissed,  
For the life of the Old Year is flowing  
And melting away in the mist.

II

A shadow lies black on the water,  
A silence hangs over the hill,  
And the echo comes fainter and shorter  
From the river that runs by the mill.

III

Greet the New Year with music and laughter,  
Let the Old shrink away with a tear!  
But we shall remember hereafter  
The many who die with the year.

IV

Aye! we shall regret and remember  
Mary and Maud and Irene,  
Though the swift-falling snow of December  
Lies over them now as a screen;

V

And the alternate sunshine and shadow  
Sweep over their graves with a thrill—  
Irene lies asleep in the meadow  
And Mary and Maud on the hill.

VI

Clasp hands with those who are going,  
Kiss the lips that are raised to be kissed,

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<sup>1</sup>Atlanta *Constitution*, April 20, 1879.

<sup>2</sup>New Orleans *Sunday Times*, January 1, 1867.



For the life of the Old Year is flowing  
And melting away in the mist.

These lines were revised and extended into ten stanzas for the *Savannah Morning News* January 1, 1874,<sup>1</sup> and published again in the *Atlanta Constitution* January 1, 1878. He first wrote for *The Countryman* on this theme, "Midnight, December 31, 1865."<sup>2</sup>

Another poem was published in the *Times* shortly after the above:

THE SEA WIND

O sweet south wind! O soft south wind!  
O wind from off the sea!  
When you blow to the inland ports of home,  
Kiss my love for me.

And when you have kissed her, sweet south wind,  
Tell her I never forget;  
For the pale white mists of parting tears  
Are floating round me yet.

Tell her I sit all day and dream  
Of the joys that time may bring,  
Till the old love poems afloat in my heart  
Meet together and sing.

And the tune, O wind, that they sing and ring  
(With a burst of passionate rhyme)  
Is "The Lover's Prayer," a sweet, sad air,  
A song of the olden time.

Touch her lips lightly, sweet south wind,  
As I should were I there,  
And dry up the tears in her violet eyes  
And play with her purple hair.

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<sup>1</sup>See page 107.    <sup>2</sup>See Part II.

O soft south wind! O sweet south wind!  
O wind from off the sea!  
When you blow to the inland ports of home,  
Kiss my love for me.

And the following verses, written about the same time, should be compared with "Katie," by Timrod (d. 1867):

AGNES<sup>1</sup>

I

She has a tender, winning way  
And walks the earth with gentle grace,  
And roses with the lily play  
Amid the beauties of her face.

II

Whene'er she tunes her voice to sing,  
The song birds list with anxious looks;  
For it combines the notes of spring  
With all the music of the brooks.

III

Her merry laughter, soft and low,  
Is as the chimes of silver bells,  
That, like sweet anthems, float and flow  
Through woodland groves and bosky dells.

IV

And when the violets see her eyes,  
They flush and glow with love and shame;  
They meekly droop with sad surprise,  
As though unworthy of the name.

V

But still they bloom where'er she throws  
Her dainty glance and smiles so sweet,  
And e'en amid stern winter's snows  
The daisies spring beneath her feet.\*

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<sup>1</sup>Reproduced, along with the two preceding poems, by Davidson in his "Living Writers of the South" and probably published first in a New Orleans paper, 1867.

\*Timrod: "And daisies spring about her feet."

## VI

She wears a crown of purity,  
Full set with woman's brightest gem,  
A wreath of maiden modesty,  
And virtue is the diadem.

## VII

And when the pansies bloom again  
And spring and summer interwine,  
Great joys will fall on me like rain,  
For she will be forever mine!

For six months or more Harris's intellectual growth was broadened and deepened and his talent cultivated through his literary associations in New Orleans. Falling sick in May, 1867, he left for his home in Eatonton. Soon afterwards Mr. Evelyn gave up his publication and returned to England.

On his way back to Georgia—perhaps in Macon, Georgia—Mr. Harris met with Mr. J. P. Harrison, who had been for a while his genial associate in the old *Countryman* office. Mr. Harrison had married and become editor of a weekly newspaper at Forsyth, Georgia. He was now happy to secure a promise from the sometime *Countryman's* devil to become the *Monroe Advertiser's* devil. And during the next three years our author's talents were developed under uplifting influences in the town of Forsyth, within fifty miles of his birthplace.

He was now a youth of nineteen. Not stoutly grown, red-haired, freckle-faced, and of stammering speech, he was, as ever, shy and reserved with strangers. But to his little circle of town chums, among whom he was called "Red Top," he contributed fun and sense that drew them to him.<sup>1</sup> And his

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<sup>1</sup>Says Mr. H. H. Cabaniss, now of Atlanta: "I was an associate of his in Forsyth. We passed many evenings together. In his intercourse with other boys he was bright and witty, just as later in newspaper work. It was in him, and he just couldn't help it." (Letter of November 17, 1915.)

splendid mind, knowledge, and literary predilections compelled the recognition of the most cultured people. Yet then, as always, he was extremely modest and would appear quite uncouth when any one sought directly a show of his genius. Illustrative of this element in his nature, there is still told by certain elderly people in Forsyth the following story: A sister of Mr. Harrison, Nora, was one afternoon walking with Mr. Harris. The heavens were hanging in wonderful beauty against the setting sun. Miss Harrison directed the young man's attention to the view and urged an expression of his appreciation. "Why," said the elusive one, "I am reminded of a dish of scrambled eggs." The use of such earthy language was often in later years his modest method of protecting his honest soul from the approaches of insincerity, which he seemed to detect in every departure from simple, natural, spontaneous expression. Any reference to his literary merits was invariably met with a quick reply at once deprecatory and decisive. Throughout his life he was particularly sensitive to sham and false pretense abroad in the land, which restrained him from self-assertion.

Of course to be merely a printer was for Harris impossible. Already, as we have seen, his writing, both in prose and verse, had reached considerable volume. He began at once to contribute to the *Advertiser*. First there broke forth from his active and mischievous brain bright thoughts, witty "personal notes," and sarcastic "news items," each expressed in a few succinct lines full of fun. These clever little paragraphs were in direct line of descent from the conundrums, puns, and smart sayings of *The Countryman's* devil. Mr. H. H. Cabaniss, a pioneer newspaper man in Georgia, who lived during those years in Forsyth and succeeded Mr. Harrison as editor of the *Advertiser*, says:

It was while setting type at the case that Harris would run in some of the bright things dancing in his brain; and, in my opinion, he thus originated the newspaper paragraph of wit. It was his custom to have them appear in a column to themselves, usually in the first column of the editorial page. The proprietor of the paper encouraged him in this work, and it soon became a feature of the paper. Fitch was then editor of the *Griffin Star* and was quite a character in Georgia journalism and politics. I recall how Harris would give him a thrust once in a while.

It was on the 12th of July, 1868, that Mr. Harris himself wrote in a letter how he thought he was "cut out for a paragraphing journalist."<sup>1</sup> Long before he became personally known to the newspaper men at the State press conventions his pungent lines drew comment and praise from all sides. While he was still with the *Advertiser* there was hardly a paper in the State that did not repeatedly turn some pleasantry upon "Red Top" or "Sorrel Top" Harris.<sup>2</sup> In the summer of 1868 the *Atlanta Constitution* was projected, and there was an understanding that Harris should have a place on the staff.<sup>3</sup> However, he did not at that time leave the *Advertiser*.

But Mr. Harris had an ambition to be more than a newspaper editor. Force of circumstances alone was to bind him to the hack work of journalism until his talent and genius should lift into literature his mere newspaper matter. He was a serious student of literature. Magazines and books were placed on his table by Mr. Harrison,<sup>4</sup> in whose home

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<sup>1</sup>Charles A. Pilsbury, in (Southern) *Home Journal*.

<sup>2</sup>One of Mr. Harris's scrapbooks has many clippings of these newspaper references to him. Unfortunately, the name of the paper and date of publication are often lacking. The service of the clipping bureau was not had until later.

<sup>3</sup>See quotation from J. T. Manry, page 87.

<sup>4</sup>Mrs. G. A. Starke, sister of Mr. Harrison, in a letter of March 19, 1915.

he lived, and he had access to the little town library. There is preserved in his youthful scrapbook a loose sheet of paper upon which, while at Forsyth or probably earlier, he indicated his conception of a novel of "domestic life rather than of adventure"—so his note reads. Under "Chapter I." there appears the melancholy quotation:

An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
A spirit from on high.<sup>1</sup>

In personal letters quoted by Mr. Charles A. Pilsbury appear Mr. Harris's literary visions. During 1867 he "nursed a novel in his brain." On December 27, 1867, he writes to a friend from Forsyth: "I shall probably turn my attention wholly to prose, as it pays better. Shall try a tale after the new school of English fiction." In February, 1868, he expresses his purpose to follow literature as a profession. He has chosen prose and will trust his impulses to direct him. Four months later, still subordinating his efforts in poetry to his prose work, he proposes to cultivate the tale, the essay, and the review, and he is contemplating a novel. In this letter of June and in another of October of the same year, 1868, his ambition is suggesting a literary career in a great city, such as New York. Yet he would "give up ruralizing with regret."<sup>2</sup>

So far as the records can be found, Mr. Harris's most considerable accomplishment in prose during his residence in Forsyth (1867-70) was perhaps a series of contributions to the *Advertiser* in the nature of short stories of fox-hunting and discussions of the different kinds of fox hounds. This matter was not written out with pen, but, as he sat at the printer's case, was set in type. Mrs. Mary Cabaniss, of

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<sup>1</sup>Nothing further is to be gotten from this scrap of paper.

<sup>2</sup>Charles A. Pilsbury, in (Southern) *Home Journal*.

Forsyth, says that "early after he came into the office as printer's devil he showed his ability in short-story writing, producing graphic descriptions of fox hunts, etc., drawn wholly from imagination, but so real that it seemed as if he had indeed been in the chase."<sup>1</sup> We now know, of course, how he had played the part of the fox in training Mr. Harvey Dennis's hounds in Eatonton, and that he had often been in the chase on the Putnam County plantations; and it will be recalled that *The Countryman*, in 1863-64, carried a series of contributed articles from some connoisseur of fox hounds. Mr. Harris again wrote of the fox hunt when he began publishing short stories in the *Atlanta Constitution*.<sup>2</sup>

However much or little verse he may have himself written at this time, his interest in poetry was keen, and his knowledge of contemporary Southern poets was intimate. Mr. Pilsbury records some expressions from him. When a friend praised a poem of his as superior to any written by Flash or Timrod, Mr. Harris protested:

Flash may not please every one; but there is not that man living who, possessing any literary taste, can read some of Timrod's happier efforts and not give him the palm for being the first poet of the South. Poor Timrod! He is dead now, but his name will live while there is true taste extant. As a man of the world he was nothing; as a poet he was everything. He was a poet by nature and culture, one of the few who sing for their own edification and not for fame; Philomela in the desert; and I might pursue the figure further and speak of the heart against the thorn, for poor Timrod had troubles. But these only made him sing the louder.

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Mary Cabaniss, in written response to inquiry. The *Advertiser* files have been lost.

<sup>2</sup>In the *Atlanta Constitution*, December 16, 1877, appeared "A Georgia Fox Hunt," which was rewritten for publication in "On the Plantation." See Part II.

Again, while at Forsyth, Georgia, April, 1868, he wrote of the Laniers:

Sidney and Clifford Lanier are brothers, born and raised in Macon, Georgia. Clifford is very young, but promises good things. Sidney is the cleverest, as you say—in fact, he is a man of genius. His novel, "Tiger Lilies," is original and good. His poems, published from time to time in the "Round Table," are poems—quaint, unique, and characteristic.

When Mr. J. W. Davidson was preparing his "Living Writers of the South," he sought the judgment of the twenty-year-old printer as to the authorship of the famous national poem, "All Quiet along the Potomac." Mr. Harris had been for some time investigating the matter, and there is record of his correspondence upon the subject in March, 1868, with Dr. A. H. Guernsey, editor of Harper's Magazine. As a commentary on his literary interest at this time, his reply to Mr. Davidson, dated June 8, 1868, is given as it was published:

After a careful and impartial investigation of all the facts in my reach, I have come to the conclusion that Mrs. Beers, and not Mr. Fontaine, wrote the poem in question.

In your sketch of Lamar Fontaine, published in January, 1866, I distinctly remember that you do not, except upon the strength of his own testimony, claim the poem for him; but with evident design you avoid saying that he wrote it. My reasons for believing that Mr. Fontaine is not the author of "All Quiet" are several:

1. The poem appeared in *Harper's Weekly* for November 30, 1861, as "The Picket Guard," over the initials of Mrs. Ethel Beers, of New York.

2. It did not make its appearance in any Southern paper until about April or May, 1862.

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<sup>1</sup>"Living Writers of the South," J. W. Davidson. Carleton, New York, 1869. Mr. Harris prepared the index for this book. See page 87.



3. It was published as having been found in the pocket of a dead soldier on the battle field. It is more than probable that the dead soldier was a Federal and that the poem had been clipped from *Harper's*.

4. I have compared the poem in *Harper's* with the same as it first appeared in the Southern papers and find the punctuation to be precisely the same.

5. Mr. Fontaine, so far as I have seen, has given elsewhere no evidence of the powers displayed in that poem. I, however, remember noticing in the *Charleston Courier*, in 1863 or 1864, a "Parodie" (as Mr. L. F. had it) on Mrs. Norton's "Bingen on the Rhine," which was positively the poorest affair I ever saw. Mr. Fontaine had just come out of a Federal prison; and some irresponsible editor, in speaking of this "Parodie," remarked that the poet's Pegasus had probably worn his wings out against the walls of his Northern dungeon. . . .

You probably know me well enough to acquit me, in this instance at least, of the charge of prejudice. I am jealous of Southern literature; and if I have any partiality in the matter at all, it is in favor of Maj. Lamar Fontaine. I should like to claim this poem for that gentleman. I should be glad to claim it as a specimen of Southern literature. But the facts in the case do not warrant it.<sup>1</sup>

It was in this volume of Mr. Davidson's (New York, 1869) that the first sketch of our author was published, when he was just of age. We discover in it grievous errors, such as occurs in the startling assertion that Mr. Harris was practicing law. But, although the sketch is not wholly trustworthy, the fact of importance is that there was at that time any sketch at all published; while, if no more, we can draw very substantial inference from Mr. Davidson's high ranking of "Chandler Harris" among the young

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<sup>1</sup>In later years, according to Prof. C. Alphonso Smith, Mr. Harris came to believe that Thaddeus Oliver, of Buena Vista, Georgia, was the author of this poem. See "Library of Southern Literature"; also *Atlanta Constitution*, May 19, 1880.

writers that were surely to become "men of mark in letters" and from his statement that Mr. Harris was preparing a work to be entitled "Gems of Southern Poetry," illustrative poems from the best Southern poets and biographical sketches.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Davidson speaks of Mr. Harris chiefly as a poet, comparing two of his New Orleans poems with Flash's and Timrod's.<sup>2</sup> It was about a year later that Mr. Harris produced two little poems that have the genuine ring. We are not surprised that a little child was the source of his inspiration, as we learn from the following letter to a sister of Mr. Harrison:

FORSYTH, GEORGIA, 20 June, 1870.

*Dear Mrs. Starke:* . . . I have been trying to write a few verses for Nora Belle; and I thought I would finish them, print them, and write at the same time. I find, however, it is quite useless to wait any longer. I have written twenty different trifles for my little sweetheart; but none of them come up to my standard of merit or do justice to the subject, and I have destroyed them all in despair. The inspiration—or whatever you may please to call it—doesn't come to me as usual, and I find myself in that most perplexing of positions—namely, the desire to write without the ability. Don't laugh at me, please. My judgment has outgrown my power to perform, and I dare say that I shall never be as well pleased with anything I may hereafter write as I was with the first doggerel I ever wrote. . . .

Very truly your friend, JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.<sup>3</sup>

Happily, the poet made a twenty-first trial, producing a beautiful tribute to little Nora Belle Starke.<sup>4</sup> In a letter from Savannah, dated June 4, 1872, to Mrs. Starke, Mr.

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<sup>1</sup>No such work was published by Harris.

<sup>2</sup>See these poems on pages 72-74, above.

<sup>3</sup>Letter in possession of Mrs. G. A. Starke, Atlanta, Georgia.

<sup>4</sup>Miss Starke is now a member of the faculty of Washington Seminary, Atlanta.

Harris tells of how the verses had been copied from one end of the South to the other and how the Western papers were then taking them up. Paul Hamilton Hayne, he says, considered them "very fine."<sup>1</sup> As first published in the *Monroe Advertiser*, the lines are here reproduced through the courtesy of Mrs. Starke:

*NORA BELLE*

To the mother of little Nora Belle, the purity of whose everyday life is a grander poem than man has ever yet written, I dedicate the following unpretending lines.

Of all the little fairies  
That ever love caressed,  
I know our little darling  
Is the brightest and the best.  
O the neatest and the sweetest!  
No tongue can ever tell  
How much of love we lavish  
On little Nora Belle.

She cannot reach the roses  
That grow about her way,  
But in her face are flowers  
More beautiful than they;  
And the sunlight falling round her  
Glow with a magic spell,  
Shedding a golden glory  
On little Nora Belle.

She is winsome, she is winning,  
She is blithe, and she is gay,  
And she asks the wisest questions  
In the most old-fashioned way;  
And the lilies in the valley  
And the daisies in the dell  
Are not so pure and tender  
As little Nora Belle.

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<sup>1</sup>See letter to Mrs. Starke, quoted later, page 98.

For years ago our Saviour  
 Blessed children with a touch,  
 And still his words are ringing:  
 "My kingdom is of such."  
 Flushed with his holy meaning,  
 They stand outside of sin;  
 And with his hand to guide them,  
 They may not enter in.

O rare sunshine and shadow,  
 That chase each other so,  
 That fall and flit and flicker  
 And restless come and go!  
 O winds from o'er the ocean,  
 O breezes from the dell,  
 Bring nought but health and pleasure  
 To little Nora Belle.

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.

This is probably the best of all his poetic efforts. "A Christmas Regret" also was written about this time, marked by appropriate structure, rhythm, and diction:

*A CHRISTMAS REGRET<sup>1</sup>*

TO NORA BELLE

You were not here that day  
 When the Christmas songs were sung,  
 And you were ever so far away  
 When New Year's bells were rung.

The music and the dancing were fine,  
 And the children were full of glee,  
 When they stood drawn up in line  
 Around the Christmas tree.

Ah! the music and the dancing were fine;  
 But something was lacking there—  
 I missed the light and the shine  
 Of a little girl's golden hair.

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<sup>1</sup>Copy supplied by Mrs. Starke.

Every heart was full of glee,  
But my words and smiles were few;  
No joy was there for me—  
My thoughts were all for you.

I'd have given all the music so fine,  
Every song that was sung, every jest,  
For your soft little cheek against mine,  
For your dear little head on my breast.

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.

A very full account of Mr. Harris in Forsyth, based upon personal recollections, has been secured from J. T. Manry, now living in Louisiana, who was not only a fellow printer in the *Advertiser* office, but was also Mr. Harris's roommate in the home of the editor. Mr. Manry writes:

On the third day of March, 1868, I entered the *Advertiser* office as an apprentice, walking from my father's home, seven miles west. I was met at the office door by Mr. J. P. Harrison, then, and for some years, editor and proprietor of the paper. He soon introduced me to Mr. Harris, who was working, setting long-primer type, on a double rack, or case. I was carried immediately to his right, where I was shown the first case of type I had ever seen. I could not help observing Mr. Harris closely, and now his picture stands out perfectly before me. He had the reddest hair I had ever seen, I thought, and had less to say than any one with whom I have ever been thrown in contact. He stammered badly in his speech, and it was apparently an effort for him to meet a stranger.

I remained three years in the office, being with Mr. Harris constantly both night and day, as we occupied the same small room at Mr. J. P. Harrison's. And I would like to say right here that I never knew of one act of injustice committed by Mr. Harris during that time. He was always kind and considerate of the feelings of others and doubly so to me. When he was offered the position on the *Savannah News*, he had to make a hurried departure; and he asked me to pack his trunk and express it to him, as his clothes

were then out being washed. I recall the nice letter I afterwards received from him, in which he spoke of Colonel Thompson as "gentle as a morning zephyr."

On entering the *Advertiser* office I had read but one novel. The question about my reading came up between Mr. Harrison and Mr. Harris. I requested Mr. Harris to select such books as I should read and subscribed to a circulating library kept at Dr. Jayne's drug store. I have Mr. Harris to thank for what knowledge of books I got for the three years I was with him. He wrote me from Savannah to let him know of any books that I wished; and, at my request, he sent me Josh Billings's "Family Tree."

When I had been in the office for a few weeks, Mr. Harris began to get out a column of news run solid (not leaded), that it was my duty to put in type. He began to publish, too, short witticisms and personal notes, which at once attracted notice. He could say more in a few lines than almost any other writer. He never wrote out these items, but set them in type at once. The fox-hunting articles, signed "Towaliga," were composed the same way. I remember that I had to correct from reading the type all of his matter. His fox-hunting stories brought out the virtues of the different breeds of fox hounds—the Birdsong and others. I remember his telling me his reason for the publication of this series of articles. He said he believed that the Monroe County people would take more interest in the paper. And they did.

• It was then the custom for every county newspaper to have a lengthy editorial; but when the readers found information, and a hearty laugh as well, in Harris's short, witty, occasionally sarcastic lines, the *Advertiser* was eagerly read and in demand. I remember one of his witticisms about the Kimball House, erected in Atlanta near 1870 by H. I. Kimball and R. B. Bullock. It was then probably the highest building in the State. Mr. Harris referred to it as the "Hi Kimball." The papers of the State took up the play, until the hotel received immense free advertising. I have been told that Mr. Kimball introduced himself to Mr. Harris and told him that boarding at the Kimball would cost him nothing, that his bills should be referred to H. I. Kimball. I

have also been told that in the hotel office is an engraving, "Hi Kimball House." The presswork for the Monroe *Advertiser* was done entirely by Mr. Harris. I have yet to find his superior as a pressman. The *Advertiser* took a fifty-dollar prize at the Georgia State Fair as the best-printed county weekly.<sup>1</sup> The press was an old-time Washington hand press, and I frequently rolled the forms. There were about five hundred subscribers. I can recall various witticisms of Mr. Harris as the different post offices were called. When Culloden, for instance, was called, he would say: "The field of Culloden rises red in my sight."

The first literary work that he did, to my knowledge, was in preparing the index for "Living Writers of the South." I cannot just now recall the author [See page 80] of the book, though I gave a copy of it to his son Julian some two years ago. I presume you have read his "Aunt Minerva Ann." I can name nearly every one of the characters, as they were taken in Forsyth, where the scene is laid. There is a correct portrayal of the old *Advertiser* office as I knew it. The rose hedge is on the Indian Springs road, about one mile from Forsyth. The lane was covered with the Cherokee rose for a long distance. This is where the Gosset boys had the fight. I have the margins of the book scribbled all over. The Samantha character is Sallie Watkins, who was cook in the Harrison home. Two years ago, after learning that I had mentioned her in a newspaper article, she sent me word that she was still alive.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Harris was paid, I think, only forty dollars a month for his services to the *Advertiser*. As to the price Colonel Thompson was to pay him on the *Morning News* staff, I do not know. But I do know that he was to have had a position on the *Atlanta Constitution* when it should be established. Mr. J. P. Harrison, S. F. Fitch, of Griffin, Cary W. Stiles, of Albany, and the editor of the *Americus Recorder* were present at Indian Springs, where the establishment of the *Constitution* was planned. I carried from the post office

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<sup>1</sup>Recall the neat appearance of *The Countryman*, page 44.

<sup>2</sup>As to Harris's taking his characters and incidents from life, see page 67 and Part II.

the second issue of the paper, and I remember with what eagerness Mr. Harris received it.

I think Mr. Harris was more influenced by Mrs. J. P. Harrison and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Starke, than by any one else. Mrs. Harrison was a member of the Methodist Church and was a noble woman. The first poem I ever knew Mr. Harris to write was inscribed to Mrs. Starke's little daughter, Nora Belle. He sent nearly all of his salary to his mother, who lived in Eatonton. I carried the mail to and from the post office, and I believe that I could swear to his mother's handwriting. I know he was always glad to receive her letters.<sup>1</sup>

When summing up the formative influences upon Harris's career, one must place the three years in Forsyth as second only to the four years at Turnwold. In Forsyth the youth became the man. He entered the *Advertiser* office before he was nineteen and left after he was twenty-one. In 1867 he was employed to set type and prepare the forms for the press. For some time such contributions as he made to the contents of the paper were gratuitous. But ere long he was preparing a regular column that was gladly accounted for by the proprietor-editor in the salary paid him.<sup>2</sup> From being only a member of the typesetters' union, Joe Harris within three years became a marked figure among the editors, correspondents, and reporters at the press conventions of the State. His pen was magnetic. Newspaper men from every county were drawn to him and published their recognition of his merits. The bright office boy had become the accomplished journalist. His more distinctly

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<sup>1</sup>The author has compiled this account from a letter dated Plain Dealing, Louisiana, August 26, 1915, written by J. T. Manry to Miss S. S. Center, of Forsyth and New York, and from Mr. Manry's correspondence to the Monroe *Advertiser*, issues of June 15, 1906, and December 6, 1912.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Starke, letter of March 19, 1915.



literary progress, too, was decisive. He had his visions, he worked diligently, and he produced no uncertain results. Appreciation of his writing was manifested by the cultured people of his community, and his name was enrolled among men of letters in the South.

Best of all, moreover, Joe Harris learned in Forsyth what it means to have friends. He had left Eatonton at twelve, too young to realize the significance of friendship. At Turnwold there was small chance for him to have the full experience. Mr. Turner was too much his senior, and there was not opportunity sufficient to prove true friendship between himself and others with whom he may have been for a part of the time associated. His residence in Macon and in New Orleans was too brief for friendships, but sufficient, doubtless, for him to feel himself alone in the city's cold crowd. So into Forsyth came this lone son of a poor seamstress, lately taken by sickness from his honorable position in gay and cultured New Orleans back to rural Eatonton, into the most poignant realization and immediate sharing of his mother's bitter poverty and loneliness. Now came into his life the blessing of friends whose tender sympathy and intelligent encouragement eased his disconsolate mind and uplifted his heart. Intimate and valuable associations were developed with H. H. Cabaniss and other young men of the town.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Harrison took him into his home, where friendships for life were cemented. Mrs. Harrison took the deepest personal interest in him. An older sister of Mr. Harrison, Mrs. Georgia Starke, who regularly visited her brother and sometimes had Mr. Harris as a guest in her mother's home, must have received his confidences and influenced his life as did no one else at that time. It was her little daughter for whom Mr. Harris cherished such affection as was

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<sup>1</sup>See reference to H. H. Cabaniss, pages 75, 76.

shown in the verses already quoted. Published with the lines to Nora Belle, too, was his significant tribute to the mother.<sup>1</sup> A younger sister became a friend about whom possibly gathered something of a romance.<sup>2</sup> We may well believe that Mr. Harris left Forsyth very hastily, as Mr. Manry tells us, because he dared not undergo leave-taking from his friends. He went to Savannah in response to an offer that came to him, not as the result of an application on his part, but as the result of a recognition on the part of the *News* proprietor of his value and possibilities. Just after this fashion he had gone to Forsyth; and so, when he had proved himself in Savannah, was he to be called to the *Atlanta Constitution*.

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<sup>1</sup>See the poem as given on page 83; also see letters quoted hereafter, pages 92ff.

<sup>2</sup>See the little poem, "A Remembrance," page 99.

## VI

IT was probably in October of 1870 that Mr. Harris accepted a call to the associate editorship of the *Savannah Morning News*. This was a phenomenal promotion, conclusive evidence of the faithfulness and rapidity with which he had built upon the foundation laid at Turnwold. Forsyth was but a village of fifteen hundred people; Savannah, with a population of twenty-eight thousand, was the oldest and largest city in the State. The *News* was, next to the *Augusta Chronicle*, the first newspaper established in Georgia and was read by thousands where the *Advertiser* was read by hundreds. It was generally considered the best all-round paper in the Southeastern States. Col. W. T. Thompson, editor from its beginning, in 1850, had achieved, in addition to the honor of his long and excellent journalistic work, literary fame as a humorist of first rank. Young Harris, knowing these facts, moved into his new position with bounding pulse and a heart filled with song of high success.

Within a few months he wrote in a personal letter that he had found life in Savannah unexpectedly pleasant and that his success seemed assured. He said that Mr. Harrison had endeavored to attract him to the *Advertiser* again. However, he intimated, New York would probably be the scene of his later conquest. But his letter was devoted chiefly to the precious memory of the old friends in Forsyth. He had left them only because it appeared his duty to accept the superior offer made to him by the *News*. Except for his brief sojourns in Macon and New Orleans, he was now for the first time absolutely among strangers, farther from the home of his childhood than he was ever to live again. He was no longer in a friend's home as

one of the family, but eating and sleeping in a boarding house. He was not a co-worker on a paper to him much as his own, but was one employed to do a certain amount of labor on a great daily whose ownership was of small personal concern to him. And he gave small occasion for any one to take interest in him. A venerable citizen of Savannah who saw him daily during those years recalls that he was retiring and hard to approach, seeming content to live his life very much to himself; that he attended no church regularly; that he was not given to joking or story-telling, but rather was very quiet and added few comments to the conversation around him; that he was "homely, red-haired, freckle-faced—in general appearance a veritable "cracker." So, after the novelty of his new situation had worn off during the months of autumn, and after dreary winter had come, he was in a melancholy mood when, on the eve of his twenty-second birthday anniversary, there greeted him a letter from his dear friend, Mrs. Starke. Immediate response poured forth from his soul, revealing a conception of life and an ambition that would have startled the unsuspecting stranger, sentiments and emotions that the world might not perceive, until it read through the character of Uncle Remus:

OFFICE MORNING NEWS, SAVANNAH, GEORGIA,  
9 Dec., 1870.

*Dear Mrs. Starke:* You cannot imagine how glad I was to receive your letter yesterday. It is something to be remembered by one's friends, isn't it? And such remembrances as your letter are very precious. It came just in time to relieve me from a serious attack of the blues; and in order to secure a repetition of the remedy, I write at once.

About myself there is, indeed, very little to be said. I left Forsyth with much regret and only after the most seri-

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<sup>1</sup>Oral statement of Mr. A. McC. Duncan, August, 1915.

ous deliberation. If I had consulted my desires—my personal feelings, I mean—I would have remained on the *Advertiser*; but in this miserable world personal predilections are often sacrificed for gain. It is a sad confession to make; but, in my case at least, it is true. The personal relations between Mr. Harrison and myself have been throughout of the kindest and the most intimate character. There have been occasions undoubtedly when his impatient temper rendered me uncomfortable, because I am extremely sensitive; but I dare say that my shortcomings, together with the thousand and one imperfections which, through some bitter destiny, are a part of my nature, have to an infinite degree overbalanced everything. The cause of my leaving Forsyth was a matter of business simply and had nothing to do with my friendship or personal feelings. I was offered a position as associate editor on the *News* at a salary that I could not refuse, and I therefore concluded to accept. . . . I spoke fully and freely of my hopes and prospects and asked his (Mr. H.) advice in the matter. . . . The position of associate editor on a leading paper like the *News* is not often tendered to a person as young and inexperienced as myself, and I could not refuse. In speaking with Mr. H. I had insisted upon and emphasized the fact that it was my *desire* to remain in Forsyth, but that I considered it my *duty* to come to Savannah, . . . what I conceived to be a perfectly plain distinction between duty and desire. He afterwards came to Savannah to see me and to offer a proposition, the acceptance of which would take me back to Forsyth. . . . If you have received even so much as a hint that I left Forsyth on account of a misunderstanding, I assure you it is a mistake. . . . I never knew what a real friend was until I went to Forsyth; and it is no wonder that I look back upon my life there with tenderest and most sincere regrets—regrets that I was compelled to give it up. My history is a peculiar and unfortunate one, and those three years in Forsyth are the very brightest of my life. They are a precious memorial of what would otherwise be as bleak and desolate as winter; and the friends whom I knew and loved there, whom I still know and love, will never lose their places in my heart—those dear friends who were so gentle, so kind, and so good, who were always

ready to overlook my shortcomings and to forgive my awkward blunders. There is pathos enough in the recollection of these things to form an immortal poem, if one could only fashion it aright. But, for my part, I will not try. Words are weak at best, and it is only once in a century that they should be employed on such a sacred subject. That part of my life which is still in the future I am willing to trust entirely to fate or Providence, but I know that the coming years hold for me no such happiness and will duplicate no such dear days. I know in my soul that I will never again find such friends, tender and true-hearted, faithful and forgiving. . . . I do not easily forget. My surroundings here are pleasant to a degree that I could not have hoped for, and my success seems to be assured. But there is *something* wanting—something, I cannot tell what. I do not feel at home. The place lacks something.

After all, though, these objections are only nominal. The main point is success and advancement. Whether I shall succeed ultimately, I cannot tell. I will do my best, and then if I fail I will have the satisfaction of knowing precisely of what I am capable; and you will agree with me that, in the vanities and egotisms of youth, knowledge of that sort is invaluable. In case of failure I give place simply to some one who perhaps is infinitely better and worthier.

. . . . .

Don't fail to write to me. I have been without sympathy a good portion of my life; and your letters are very highly prized, I do assure you. Please remember when you write to a "lonesome" boy like me you are doing missionary work.

I have no idea how long I shall remain in Savannah, the probability being that I shall gravitate toward that shining Sodom called New York; but, here, there, or elsewhere, please remember that I am always the same and always your friend.

J. C. HARRIS.<sup>1</sup>

With a mother's tender heart, Mrs. Starke sat right down

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Mr. Harris to Mrs. Georgia Starke, dated Savannah, Georgia, December 9, 1870.

and wrote the forlorn young man a long letter. She urged him to make friends among the new people. But, writing again at once of his consuming affection for his old friends, he declared his "absolute horror of strangers" and wrote pathetically of his "morbid sensitiveness," that caused him more mortification and grief than anything in the world. These two elements in his nature largely explain why Mr. Harris, the "shy little recluse" of Eatonton, remained throughout his life a shy recluse. He would not try now to make friends, he said, for another reason: he desired to be thrown entirely upon his own resources, in order that he might know truly of what he was capable.

MORNING NEWS OFFICE, SAVANNAH, GEORGIA,  
18 Dec., 1870.

*Dear Mrs. Starke:* . . . [Appreciation of a long letter.]

I don't expect to make any friends here, for the simple reason that I shall not try. I haven't room in my heart for them. My love, my friendship, and my esteem are exhausted on the few friends that I already have. You see, I am conservative in my disposition and suspicious of new faces. I wouldn't give even the memory of *my* friends for the balance of the world. I have an absolute horror of strangers; and as for making friends of them now, it is not to be thought of. I am determined to put myself to the test at once, so that I may know exactly what is in me. In order to do this I will have to trust entirely to merit for success instead of depending upon the biased judgment of friends. By this means my capabilities, if I have any, will show themselves.

My letters are exact transcripts of my thoughts. They stand me instead of a "gift of gab," which, most unfortunately, I do not possess. . . .

The truth is, I am morbidly sensitive. With some people the quality of sensitiveness adds to their refinement and is quite a charm. With me it is an affliction, a disease that has cost me more mortification and grief than anything in the world or everything put together. The least hint, a word, a

gesture is enough to put me in a frenzy almost. The least coolness on the part of a friend, the slightest rebuff tortures me beyond expression; and I have wished a thousand times that I was dead and buried and out of sight. You cannot conceive to what extent this feeling goes with me. It is worse than death itself. It is HORRIBLE. My dearest friends have no idea how often they have crucified me. Of course no one can sympathize with such an inexplicable disposition. I can see how foolish it is; but the feeling is there, nevertheless, and I can no more control it than I can call into life the "dry bones" or bid the moon to stand still "over the valley of Ajalon." . . . Her treatment of me was perhaps the best, after all; for it showed me, more completely than a thousand years' experience could have done, what a coarse, ungainly boor I am—how poor, small, and insignificant.

. . . . .  
This letter is all about self, self, self. That is the burthen, the chorus, and the refrain—self, self, self. I beg that you will pardon such dreary dribble and consider it confidential. I do not often tell my thoughts so precisely and do not care to do so.

Most sincerely and faithfully your friend,

J. C. HARRIS.<sup>1</sup>

During the months that followed it was often letters from Mrs. Starke, undoubtedly, that kept the divine fire burning in his soul. Sympathy, counsel, encouragement, good cheer, and inspiration came to him from this unfailing source. He always gratefully acknowledged that she saved him from New York. Thirty years later he wrote of the abiding influence of this friendship through all the years, attributing to it his best work.<sup>2</sup> When he had been in Savannah for nearly two years, the following letter was written:

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<sup>1</sup>Letter to Mrs. Starke, dated Savannah, Georgia, December 18, 1870.

<sup>2</sup>Letter to Mrs. Starke, dated Atlanta, December 23, 1901, and letter to Miss Nora Belle Starke, dated Atlanta, December 26, 1906, both in possession of Mrs. Starke.



SAVANNAH, June 4, 1872.

*My Dear Friend:*

I have often thought that my ideas were in some degree distorted and tinged with a coloring of romance fatal to any practical ambition. But if it is to be so, so be it. You may be sure that I will cling to my idiosyncrasies. They are a part of me, and I am a part of them. They are infinitely soothing, and I would not be without them for the world. Why, sometimes, do you know, I give myself up to the sweet indolence of thinking for hours at a time, and at such times I am supremely and ineffably happy—happy whether my thoughts are tinged with regret or flushed with hope. Not the least of my pleasures is the pleasure of melancholy. Sorrow is sometimes sweet—*always* sweet when it brings back to us, through the unexplorable caverns of the nights that have fled, some dear dead face, the tone of some silent voice. Those who have not groped through the mystery of pain, who have not been wrapped about with the amber fogs of sorrow, have not experienced the grandest developments of this life, and from my soul I pity them.

Nearly akin to these things is another experience of mine, and it is very curious. When I was about six years old, I went with my mother to the funeral of my grandmother; and the first words that the preacher said—and the only ones that I remember—have sung in my ears from that day to this. I have never forgotten them for a single moment. They are present with me at all times and under all circumstances. No matter what I do, what I say, nor where I turn, these words are running in my mind like an undertone of sweet music: "*I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord.*" I often say it aloud, unintentionally and unconsciously. In my copy books which I used at school it is written hundreds of times. In my composition book it occupies every available place: "*I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord.*" . . .

If you only knew how precious your letters are, how they are read and reread, you would not think the time spent in writing them altogether thrown away.

I inclose you a copy of "A Remembrance." It is crude

enough, both in thought and in expression; but the invariable result of all of my attempts at elaboration is to consign everything to the wastebasket. Speaking of attempts at verse-building reminds me to tell you that "Nora Belle" has been copied from one end of the South to the other, and the Western papers are now taking it up. I learn through a friend that General Toombs has spoken very highly of it, and through another that Paul Hayne, the poet, characterized it as "very fine."

I am never more lonely than when in a crowd.

Now, as always, faithfully your friend, J. C. HARRIS.<sup>1</sup>

These letters to Mrs. Starke indicate the powerful period of introspection through which he was passing. The experience was essential, but he must be saved from morbidness. While he was assured of success in his profession, and his ambition and hope were high, still he was conscious of "something wanting"; the place "lacked something." It was something to lift him out of himself that was needed. The lack was in his heart; and there was wanting, not something, but some one. Romance, which had "tinged his ideas," should now become part of his life. He needed now more than friendship alone; he needed love. But the society of young ladies was for him a thing unknown and not to be contemplated. Feeling that he had no personal attractions, having a horror of strangers, and afflicted with sensitiveness, social embarrassment was the dread of his life, and habitually he sought the seclusion of his daily and nightly newspaper work. "Mingled in society?" replies Mrs. Starke. "That is a joke, if it were not so serious."<sup>2</sup>

Yet, as the world has since come to know, he had a heart

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<sup>1</sup>Letter to Mrs. Starke, dated Savannah, Georgia, June 4, 1872.

<sup>2</sup>Letter dated Atlanta, March 19, 1915.

fashioned only to love. This we see through these letters, and from such a heart occasionally flowed revealing lyrics. Of "A Remembrance" Mrs. Starke writes: "Mr. Harris was visiting my mother on Capitol Avenue [Atlanta]; and one moonlight evening, while he was lying out on the lawn, the singing of my sister, Miss Nora Harrison, must have touched him."<sup>1</sup>

### A REMEMBRANCE<sup>2</sup>

(Atlanta, 1871)

#### I

Soft, low, and sweet, yet clear and strong,  
Rose the rich volume of your song;  
While on the languid August air,  
That swept your face and stirred your hair,  
Invoked as by some magic spell,  
Wild gusts of music rose and fell.  
In the vague hollows of the night  
The calm stars swung steadfastly bright;  
A bird, belated in the gloom,  
Flew nestward with bedraggled plume;  
A star shook loose her fiery train  
And swept across the sapphire plain—  
Then all was still, except the strong,  
Rich distone of your sweet song.

#### II

I stood entranced; my soul was bound;  
Melodious thralls enwrapt me round.

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<sup>1</sup>Letter dated Atlanta, July 24, 1915. (Miss Harrison later became Mrs. E. Y. Clarke.)

<sup>2</sup>A copy of this poem was furnished by Mrs. Starke. It was published in the Atlanta *Constitution* December 5, 1876, with four verbal changes, as follows: In line ten flew—swept; line 12, swept—shot; line 13, Then—And; line 14, distone—harmony; and the date was printed 1873.

I lived again the wild, uncouth,  
Dear, devious days of my lost youth;  
But floods of song swept in and drowned  
The old-time singers, sorrow-crowned.  
I saw once more the friends of old  
And heard their voices manifold;  
The waste, wan years slipped slowly by,  
With many a change of sea and sky,  
With many a change of form and hue,  
And left me happy there with you.

J. C. HARRIS.

These lines, written in the summer of 1871, show unmistakably that the young man was responding to romantic promptings. Within a few weeks, from the far-away North directly to Savannah, came a beautiful sixteen-year-old French-Canadian girl. Her father, a sea captain, had moved to Savannah when he began conducting a steamship business from that point. She had now graduated from the school at St. Hyacinth Convent, near Montreal, and was to spend the winter with her parents, who were living in a boarding place where Mr. Harris lived. We may imagine with what utter confusion the young editor met her. However, much against his will at first, he was occasionally thrown in her company. Her natural, frank manner soon relieved his embarrassment. Her spirit and vivacity attracted him. He began to linger after meals when she was around. He became bold enough to tease her. They matched wits daily. With the approach of summer she went away to the North, and he was grieved. They had agreed to correspond; but when she did not write often, he charged her with neglect, and the correspondence ceased.

In the fall she returned with added graces and beauty, accompanied by the rumor of a suitor in Canada. The young editor was eager to capitulate and, when given an excuse, gladly forgot his late pique. He sought her com-

pany after the noon meal each day and one evening a week when free from work. In her presence he was no longer self-conscious, but wholly at ease and happy. Any one who knows Mrs. Harris to-day can understand why this was so. Unaffected, sincere, gentle, sympathetic, adapting herself without effort to her company, full of life, and ready with wit, hers were the best of French qualities, which balanced charmingly with the marked racial characteristics of the young Saxon. Their hearts joined in comradeship. Rising responsively from his timidity and awkwardness, Joel Harris became the ardent lover. And before the winter was over she had promised to marry him.

Captain LaRose, though away from home much of the time, suspected the editor's attentions, was wary, and, when in the city, steered his daily course far in the offing. But there came a day when Mr. Harris opportunely distinguished his retreating footsteps, pursued him through the hallway, and overtook him at the doorsteps.

"Too young!" the seaman blustered. "She knows nothing of housekeeping. Both of you are too young to take care of yourselves."

"I can take care of her," protested the suitor.

"Well, if she wants to marry you, I leave it with her," were the happy words that ended the pointed conversation.

The fond father tempted his daughter with a proffered trip abroad, to France and other European countries, but she preferred to marry. In the parlor of the boarding house, on April 21, 1873, was solemnized in a quiet manner the marriage of Esther LaRose, aged eighteen, and Joel Chandler Harris, aged twenty-four. A bridal trip to North Georgia, cut short by an unseasonable spell of weather, was extended during the following summer into Canada. The young couple did not undertake housekeeping, but continued to

board in the same place, 101 Broughton Street, as long as Savannah was their home.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Harris's marriage came just halfway in the period of his residence in Savannah. His six years there were marked by intense devotion to his newspaper work. It was particularly his brisk little paragraphs in the *Advertiser* that had advanced him to the *News*,<sup>2</sup> and the punster of *The Countryman* became the paragraph editor of the great city daily. His chief duty was to gather news items from the exchanges and prepare for each issue of the paper two columns, headed "Affairs in Georgia" and "Florida Affairs."<sup>3</sup> Through the files of the *News* one quickly discovers that for him it was not a mere matter of sitting with scissors and paste pot, clipping the news from other papers, pasting the clippings on copy paper, and having little Frank L. Stanton take them to the composing room. He applied mind and heart to this special feature of his, so that his humorous and ridiculous comments on persons and incidents became the joy of the thousands who never failed to read these columns. In addition, he often shared the work of the regular editorial page and contributed to other columns various matter of his own composition. Mr. Stanton to-day recalls how often he got interested in something in the paper and later found that it was Mr. Harris who had written it.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Duncan says of Mr. Harris:

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<sup>1</sup>This account of the romance and marriage of Miss LaRose and Mr. Harris is based on a relation of the same by Mrs. Harris January 1, 1916. The Savannah Directory of 1874-75 gives: Harris, Joel C., assistant editor of *Morning News*, boards 101 Broughton Street; LaRose, Peter, steamboat captain, residence 101 Broughton Street.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Starke; letter dated Atlanta, Georgia, March 19, 1915.

<sup>3</sup>Oral statements of Mr. A. McD. Duncan, Mr. T. K. Oglesby, and others.

<sup>4</sup>Oral statement of Frank L. Stanton.

He appeared lazy, but worked hard day and night at his desk. When a paragraph or article appeared in an exchange that invited special attention, I have no doubt that Colonel Thompson called on Mr. Harris for an editorial on the subject, and so possibly began his writings in a systematic way. Mr. Harris and Colonel Thompson were of very different temperaments, but were congenial and worked together harmoniously.

From the Georgia and Florida columns two or three paragraphs are here taken at random. They are, of course, mere newspaper work at its farthest point of separation from work of literary quality. But this feature in the newspapers, then being first developed, was, as it still is, exceedingly effective in catching the interest of the great body of subscribers; and so Mr. Harris had to supply the unrelenting daily demand for twenty-five to fifty such items:

Col. H. Whiffletree Grady, of the *Atlanta Herald*, has found time between his editorial and poetic recreations to invent a new design for a chicken coop. The superstructure will be tested at the next State fair.

[July 6, 1874.]

Lochrane refuses to run against Freeman for Congress in the Atlanta District on the ground that the latter is his uncle or brother-in-law or something of that sort. Now, what son of a breech-loading air gun will rise and say that there is nothing in the ties of consanguinity?

[July 6, 1874.]

One with an eye for prophecy may note with satisfaction the prominence given to absurd comments on negro incidents:

A colored emigrant bound for Arkansas got into a dispute with a Macon negro the other day and was promptly vaccinated.

[January 4, 1873.]

A Lumpkin negro seriously injured his pocketknife recently by undertaking to stab a colored brother in the head.

[January 6, 1873.]

The most effective of these paragraphs were of immediate interest only, depending upon the reader's familiarity with men and affairs of that day, and so cannot be generally appreciated to-day. In the first given above, for instance, the person referred to was Henry Woodfin Grady, the great journalist and orator, with whom Harris was two years later to be associated on the *Atlanta Constitution* staff. There was carried on among the newspaper men, then even more than now, a constant cross-fire of wit, in which Harris took the lead. Among themselves they knew, too, Harris's epigrammatic work that appeared from time to time on the editorial page (examples of which one may not to-day venture to identify), and they hailed him as the master paragraphist. The *Atlanta Constitution* paid him tribute as follows:

*JINKS CONUNDRUM HARRIS*

AN ILLUSTRATED BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ONE OF GEORGIA'S  
FUNNY MEN

We gave our readers a few days ago an extract detailing the history of one Mr. Bailey, whose humorous paragraphs in a little provincial weekly in New England called the *Danbury News* have made the paper and the man famous over the Union.

We give to-day to our readers a sketch of a young man connected with the Georgia press, whose humor, in its way, is, in our judgment, equally as racy as that of the Danbury joker. We say this in seriousness. Harris's humor has made his paper, the *Savannah News*, noted for the sparkle of its Georgia column.

The following is an accurate photograph of Harris instructing some of his numerous imitators. [A cartoon by E. Purcell represents the giant figure of Harris with arm extended above three small figures. Then follows a bur-



lesque biographical sketch relating Harris to Rabelais, Falstaff, and Mark Twain, emphasizing the exuberance of his fun, and concluding as follows:]

But we must stop. The very suggestion of Harris sets our paper to capering with laughter, our table to cutting up comical didos, pen to dancing a kind of Highland fling. The following are distinguished specimens of Harris's jokes. He has them all patented:

"A Rome man wants an air-line, narrow-gauge canal between Baltimore and New Orleans. We were just talking about this thing the other day. If Rome don't have it erected, hanged if we don't put a couple of able-bodied negroes to work on it immediately and thus receive the copyright."

"The man with the ink eraser was in Macon the other day. The humblest citizen is, by this noble invention, put upon a war footing and can at once proceed to raise checks with perfect impunity."

"Col. I. W. Avery, of the *Constitution*, has purchased a new pair of silver-plated gutta-percha garters. He is now of the opinion that women should be allowed to vote, without regard to sex."

There is left to us no way of determining what "heavy" editorials were written by Mr. Harris; but, upon the opinion of men like Mr. Duncan and Mr. Oglesby, it may be assumed that he did a considerable amount of such writing. There are preserved in his "Census" scrapbook clippings of his traveling correspondence from Indian Spring, Griffin, Barnesville, Gainesville, Tallulah Falls, and Atlanta, representing pleasure trips, press conventions, agricultural conventions, and politics. All of the writing for the *News* was done with a skill that gratified the senior editor, who, soon

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<sup>1</sup>The *Atlanta Constitution*, April 23, 1873. Reproduced, in part, by the *Monroe Advertiser*, April 29, 1873.

after Mr. Harris had moved to Atlanta, expressed through his editorial columns the following appreciation :

The *Atlanta Constitution* announces that it will shortly commence in its weekly issue the publication of a serial story . . . by our friend and late associate, Mr. J. C. Harris. As a graceful and versatile writer, Mr. Harris has few equals in the South, whilst with inventive genius of a high order he combines rare powers of description, a keen sense of the ludicrous, genial humor, and caustic wit.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. H. H. Cabaniss, who had become editor of the *Monroe Advertiser*, characterized him at this time as a "brilliant paragraphist, an able political writer, and a man of rare versatility of talent."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Harris's success as an editor, indeed, now became the danger in the way of his literary career. From his early years he had given much study to literature and had proposed to become himself an author. But now he was being forced into a very practical consideration of life. In 1874 his first son, Julian, was born, and in 1875 another, Lucien. Captain LaRose was anxious to set him up in an independent newspaper business, but his pride would not allow him to accept assistance from his father-in-law.<sup>3</sup> He had to work hard, day and night, to cover the task of his regular employment, whereby he made a livelihood for his family and assisted his mother. Consequently there was no time left for the development of purely literary talent. Then, too, he had risen steadily in his profession, until he was heralded as one of Georgia's most promising journalists. So why should he turn aside to uncertain literary pursuits? But while he no longer contemplated this, his unbroken in-

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<sup>1</sup>W. T. Thompson, *Savannah Morning News*, March, 1878.

<sup>2</sup>H. H. Cabaniss, *Monroe Advertiser*, November 28, 1876. See pages 75, 76.

<sup>3</sup>Oral statement of Mrs. Harris.

tellectual habits were such as to promote his fitness for a literary career. He read extensively and practiced all kinds of written composition. Seeking access to a library, he became a member of the Georgia Historical Society (founded in Savannah in 1839).<sup>1</sup> We have seen how Colonel Thompson distinguished his particular merits as a writer—"wit," "humor," "grace," "descriptive power," "invention," "versatility." Of his abiding interest in versification there is evidence of a later date than his letter to Mrs. Starke in 1872.<sup>2</sup> For example, at the head of the first column on the front page of the *News* of January 1, 1874, appeared ten stanzas based on one of his New Orleans poems, "The Old and the New":

JANUARY 1, 1874<sup>3</sup>

## I

Clasp the hands of those who are going,  
Kiss the lips that are raised to be kissed,  
For the life of the Old Year is flowing  
And melting away in the mist.

## II

Greet the New Year with music and laughter,  
Let the Old pass away with a tear;  
For we shall remember, hereafter,  
The many who die with the year;

## III

And the songs of the children of Sorrow  
Shall unite with the echoes of mirth  
Ere the sweet, glad sun of to-morrow  
Smiles down on the night-smitten earth.

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. William Harden, the present librarian, has found record of Mr. Harris's membership. Until 1875 its library was not open to the public, and the membership fee was ten dollars.

<sup>2</sup>See page 98.

<sup>3</sup>The Savannah *Morning News*, January 1, 1874. Compare page

## IV

And the meek and stricken daughters of Anguish  
Shall lift their sharp burthens of pain  
And long, as they linger and languish,  
For Christ's blessed presence again.

## V

For time has struck down the heart's idols—  
The fairest, the dearest have died—  
And Death hath gone grimly to bridals  
And claimed the first kiss of the bride.

## VI

But the glory of noon and the gray-light  
Are gathered and mingled in one,  
And the darkness of dawn and the daylight  
Precede the approach of the sun.

## VII

A poor mother bird is oft lifted  
From the storm-shaken bough where she clung  
And cruelly driven and drifted  
Far away from her nest-full of young.

## VIII

But the wild storm that buffets and harries  
*This* lone bird about in the West  
Lifts up on its bosom and carries  
*Another* bird safe to her nest.

## IX

Ah! the span of the heavens is spacious—  
Clear sky is vouchsafed to the blind—  
The bitterest griefs are made gracious—  
The cruelest fate rendered kind.

## X

Clasp the hands of the old who are going,  
Kiss the lips that are raised to be kissed,  
For the life of the Old Year is flowing  
And melting away in the mist.

J. C. HARRIS.

Again, in love of childhood, he wrote these two poems:

JULIETTE<sup>1</sup>

[Laurel Grove Cemetery]

Lo! here the sunshine flickers bright  
Among the restless shadows,  
And undulating waves of light  
Slip through the tranquil meadows.

The hoary trees stand ranged about,  
Their damp gray mosses trailing,  
Like ghostly signals long hung out  
For succor unavailing.

And marble shafts arise here and there  
In immemorial places,  
Embalmed in nature's bosom fair  
And chiseled with art's graces.

'Twas here, Juliette, you watched the skies  
Burn into evening's splendor,  
And saw the sunset's wondrous dies  
Fade into twilight tender,

And saw the gray go out in gloom  
Upon the brow of evening,  
And watched to see the young stars bloom  
In the far fields of heaven.

. . . . .  
So comes the winter's breath, and so  
The spring renews her grasses—  
I lift my dazzled eyes, and lo!  
The mirage swiftly passes.

Dear child! for many a weary year  
The rose has shed her blossom  
Upon the tablet resting here  
Above thy tranquil bosom.

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<sup>1</sup>First published in the *Savannah Morning News*. Republished in the *Atlanta Constitution*, January 14, 1877, and in the *Saturday Evening Post*, April 21, 1900, also in *Uncle Remus's Magazine*.

*The Life of Joel Chandler Harris*

And many a season here hath brought  
Processions of newcomers,  
And many a wonder death hath wrought  
Through all these fervid summers.

And naught remains of thee, Juliette,  
Thy face and form Elysian,  
Save what the whole world will forget—  
A dreamer's dubious vision.

J. C. HARRIS.

*IN MEMORIAM<sup>1</sup>*

ADDIE E. SMITH, BLACKSHEAR, GEORGIA, AGED ELEVEN YEARS,  
DIED MAY 23, 1876.

## I

Dear child! a stranger, mourning,  
Slips from the worldly throng  
To weave and place beside thee  
This poor frayed wreath of song.

O'er him the seasons falter,  
The long days come and go,  
And Fate's swift-moving fingers  
Fly restless to and fro.

O'er thee, the west wind, sighing,  
Slow sways the clumb'rous pine;  
And through the shifting shadows  
The bright stars gently shine.

## II

When Springtime's murmurous gladness  
Filled all the listening air,  
And old Earth's rarest favors  
Bloomed fresh and sweet and fair;

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<sup>1</sup>Published in the *Monroe Advertiser*, Forsyth, Georgia, July 4, 1876. Compare "Obituary," Part II., page 164.

When waves of perfumed sunshine  
Rolled o'er the ripening wheat,  
May laid her [——?] of blossoms  
At Summer's waiting feet.

And Nature's pulses bounded  
As though infused with wine;  
Life was the season's token,  
Life was the season's sign.

And yet—ah me! the mystery  
Of this unbroken rest!—  
June sheds her thousand roses  
Above thy pulseless breast.

Bright hopes nor fond endeavor,  
Love's passion nor Life's pain,  
Shall stir thy dreamless slumber  
Or waken thee again.

## III

The fragrance of the primrose,  
That opens fresh and fair  
In the deep dusk of evening,  
Still haunts the morning air.

The songs the wild-bird warbles  
With nature's art and grace  
Are wafted on forever  
Through the vast realms of peace.

Dear child, thy pure life's cadence,  
A sad, yet sweet refrain,  
Shall wake the hearts now broken  
To life and hope again

And fall, a benediction,  
When, at the day's decline,  
Pale Sorrow, low bending,  
Weeps at Affection's shrine.

Colonel Thompson's influence upon the career of Harris must be reckoned. When the *News* was established, in 1850, Thompson became editor; and for over thirty years, while more than once the proprietorship of the paper changed, he remained editor. He had begun his editorial work with a literary periodical published in Madison and Atlanta. In 1840 he had published "Major Jones's Courtship," then "Major Jones's Sketches of Travel," and, in 1843, "Major Jones's Chronicles of Pineville." These books were immensely popular. "Major Jones," with his humor—broad, grotesque, sometimes coarse and vulgar—became a character familiar throughout the country. The first of the three books, at least, is well known to-day. So with mingled modesty and pride Mr. Harris must have read on one page of Davidson's "Living Writers of the South" the sketch of Colonel Thompson and on another page the sketch of himself. And while still moved by literary aspiration, he went to Savannah, anticipating, we may well fancy, intimate association with not only the dean of Georgia editors, but also the leading humorist in the literature of his section. Mr. Duncan, who had daily observation of the two men, says they were congenial. Mrs. Harris says: "I have often heard Mr. Harris say that Colonel Thompson was always kind and affectionate in his manner toward him and that he seemed to be as deeply interested in the success of his work as if he had been his own kinsman."<sup>1</sup> Upon more than one occasion, soon after Mr. Harris had left Savannah, Colonel Thompson published such an appreciation of his former associate's literary talent as to indicate a most intimate knowledge of his abilities.<sup>2</sup> May it not be safely as-

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Harris, letter dated February 22, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>In the *Savannah News*, 1878, as quoted earlier, page 106, and as quoted later, page 123.



sumed, then, that the younger writer was constrained, by the deep interest and affectionate manner of his elder, to seek from him counsel and criticism? There was between the two a relationship approaching, to some extent, that which had existed between Mr. Harris and Mr. Turner. The veteran editor, familiar with every feature of newspaper work, must have taken great delight in stimulating and directing the talented young man, who now determined by unsparing industry to test his ability in the field of journalism. Mr. Harris's powers were steadily developed during the six years as associate editor of the *News*, until he became established in the profession. Colonel Thompson may have contributed also more directly to Mr. Harris's eventual realization of his earlier dream of authorship. He had in his literary production effectively illustrated that principle, first taught the apprentice by Mr. Turner a decade before, upon which was to be based the creation of a true and worthy literature of the South or of any section or country. For "Major Jones" was the embodiment of the uneducated white "cracker," who was a well-known type in Georgia. With his humor and dialect, he was, indeed, succeeded by "Uncle Remus" as a parallel figure; and it is not impossible that, when later Mr. Harris came to delineate the negro, he was mindful of how Mr. Thompson had given to literature the other Southern type.

However, it was well that Mr. Harris was each year given increased freedom from the daily routine of his work. Vacations, though short, were helpful to him in preserving his perspective. The meetings of the Georgia Press Association were always refreshing. Fortunately, too, he was detailed as special correspondent in Atlanta for the *News* during the sessions of the legislature.<sup>1</sup> Here he renewed

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<sup>1</sup>Oral statement of Mrs. Harris.

his associations with his faithful friend, J. P. Harrison, who had moved from Forsyth, and warm friendship sprang up with men like Evan P. Howell and Henry Grady. Thus when the yellow fever, in the summer of 1876, drove him from Savannah, the way was easy for him to find a permanent home in Atlanta, where his genius was soon to be released for its great achievement.

## VII

“J. C. HARRIS, wife, two sons, and bilious nurse.” Two or three days before the middle of September, 1876, a reporter for the *Constitution* found the above notation on the Kimball House register.<sup>1</sup> And Joel Chandler Harris was from that date until his death, in 1908, to have his residence in Atlanta.

However, it was not his intention at that time to sever his connection with Savannah. Rather it was his purpose to see his wife and children safely located beyond the danger of yellow fever, which was then raging in their former home, and then himself steal away back to his post on the *News*.<sup>2</sup> But, after a few days in the hotel, the family was welcomed into the hospitable home of Mr. Harris's dear friend, Mr. J. P. Harrison, who had moved, in 1873, from Forsyth to Decatur,<sup>3</sup> a suburb, practically, of Atlanta. Here, as a result of happy developments, Mr. Harris remained, along with his family, until in November, when they moved to become next-door neighbors to Capt. Evan P. Howell, in a home at 201 Whitehall Street; and they were henceforth to be citizens of Atlanta.

During the days of uncertainty Mr. Harris did some correspondence for the *News*<sup>4</sup> and, being well known to the city newspaper men, occasionally made some contributions

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<sup>1</sup>This registration at the Kimball was confirmed by Mrs. Harris January 1, 1916. See *Constitution*, September 14, 1876, under "Town Topics."

<sup>2</sup>Oral statement by Mrs. Harris.

<sup>3</sup>*Constitution*, April 25, 1873.

<sup>4</sup>*Constitution*, October 20, 1876, "Good Joke on Harris."

to the local papers. One who was closely associated with him during those weeks has the following to say:

When he "refugeed" from Savannah, on account of the yellow fever epidemic there in 1876, and came to Atlanta, I became more intimately acquainted with him. I was then engaged in editorial work for the Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, of which Mr. James P. Harrison was the President. Mr. Harrison and Mr. Harris were old-time friends. Mr. Harrison invited Mr. Harris to be his guest in Decatur, a short distance from Atlanta, where I also was frequently a visitor. Occasionally Mr. Harris and myself occupied the same room.

Among the papers published by the Franklin at that time was one called *The Granger*, an organ of the Granger Movement in Georgia. Mr. Harrison requested Mr. Harris to make himself at home in the editorial "den" and assist in the editorial work whenever he felt like it. In this way, for a short while, I enjoyed Mr. Harris's companionship."

Captain Howell, of the *Constitution*, who had for some time known and admired Mr. Harris, said to him: "You are not going back to Savannah; you are going to stay right here and join the *Constitution's* staff." Very soon the exchanges began to detect some of Harris's contributions to the *Constitution*.<sup>8</sup> Mr. Harris was now considering whether he should accept the proposition from Captain Howell. In the first place, he told his wife that it was very inconvenient

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<sup>1</sup>Maj. Charles W. Hubner, in a letter dated Atlanta, December 22, 1915.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Clark Howell, son of E. P., in an oral statement July 15, 1916, gives this account.

<sup>3</sup>*Constitution*, November 24, 1876, quoting the *Talbotton Standard*: "J. C. Harris, late of the *Savannah News*, is temporarily on the *Constitution*. He is the same live coal of genius and good humor. Besides being a hard worker, he has the brightest and most promising intellect in the State. The *Constitution* will certainly make a ten strike if he is retained."

to be fleeing each year from the yellow fever. Furthermore, the city of Atlanta was showing such wonderful progress that it drew to it young men of high ambition and filled them with inspiration. During the decade from 1870 to 1880 its population was nearly doubled, bringing it to first in rank among the cities of the State.<sup>1</sup> The *Atlanta Constitution* was being named throughout the country as a great spokesman of the South.<sup>2</sup> So, after buying a controlling interest in the paper within a few weeks from Mr. Harris's arrival in Atlanta,<sup>3</sup> Captain Howell secured the consent of the popular young journalist to join his editorial staff.<sup>4</sup> On November 21, 1876, the following announcement was published in the editorial column:

The fact that Mr. J. C. Harris, late of the *Savannah News*, has been temporarily engaged upon the *Constitution* for some weeks past has been frequently alluded to by several of our contemporaries. We are glad to be able to state to-day that we have made permanent arrangements with Mr. Harris, and henceforth he will be a fixture on the editorial staff of the *Constitution*.<sup>5</sup>

A flood of press congratulations poured in upon the *Constitution* from all sections, marking the high esteem in which

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<sup>1</sup>Census: Atlanta—1870, 21,000; 1880, 37,000. Savannah—1870, 28,000; 1880, 30,000.

<sup>2</sup>For brief accounts of Atlanta and of the *Constitution*, see *Constitution*, August 28, 1878, and October 7, 1879.

<sup>3</sup>"How the *Constitution* Is Owned," *Constitution*, August 17, 1884. See also brief paragraph notice of Howell and Grady, October 19, 1876. Col. E. Y. Clarke retired from the editorship October 29, 1876.

<sup>4</sup>Mr. and Mrs. Harris named their next child, born shortly afterwards, Evan Howell. After the death of this boy, another was named Evelyn, because, says Mrs. Harris, it occurred to Mr. Harris that the two names were related.

<sup>5</sup>*Constitution*, November 21, 1876.

Mr. Harris was held throughout the State and beyond.<sup>1</sup> It was primarily as a paragraphist, undoubtedly, that Mr. Harris was called to the *Constitution*, Captain Howell knowing full well that he could also do any other kind of newspaper work in a masterly way. Probably the temporary engagement referred to in the above announcement began about October 26; for on that date there appeared in the paper a new column, taking the place of "Georgia Gossip," headed "Round about in Georgia." Personal references occurring in this column from time to time thereafter, in addition to the distinctive style, enable us to identify the editor.<sup>2</sup> It was filled with just the kind of paragraphic notes and comment that Mr. Harris had made so popular in the *Savannah Morning News*. Besides entertaining thousands of subscribers through the sparkling paragraphs, the great Atlanta paper was through this column kept in close and friendly touch with its exchanges, especially the county weeklies. The following words, published in the column April 7, 1877, show that Mr. Harris, probably more than any other newspaper man, had sought in this way to develop among the papers and cities a spirit of wholesome rivalry and fraternalism:

Some of the Georgia weeklies are apparently of the opinion that we have some ulterior purpose in noticing the country press as prominently as we do, and a few of them allude to it as a "You-tickle-me-I-tickle-you" business. Ah, well! Those who entertain such ideas ought to be allowed to enjoy them. It has been the purpose of the writer of these notices during the last ten years<sup>3</sup> to accord to the country press of

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<sup>1</sup>For example, see *Constitution*, November 30 and December 2, 1876, quoting, respectively, from the Monroe (Georgia) *Advertiser* (H. H. Cabaniss, editor) and the Warrenton (Georgia) *Clipper*.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, November 8, 1876, December 8, 1876, April 7, 1877, September 17, 23, 1879, etc.

<sup>3</sup>Ten years earlier he was with the Monroe *Advertiser*.

Georgia such recognition of its ability, influence, and services to the State as it might seem to deserve, and he is not at this late day to be deterred by the unworthy suspicion of a few who have no higher idea of their own calling than to suppose that the good will and esteem of the editor of a country weekly can be purchased by a puff. There is a "true inwardness" in such suspicion so palpable that we need not take the trouble to comment upon it.

Occasionally he used a friendly thrust :

Savannah has had her regular triweekly robbery.

Tramps are arriving in Savannah. They are going South for their health.

A dead cow on one of the thoroughfares of Americus frightened a horse the other day, and the result was serious injury to a young lady. The cow had been lying in the street for two weeks, and the only wonder is that the people of Americus didn't become frightened before the horse set them the example.

Elmira, in the great State of New York, is as funny about weather as an independent is about politics. One day they clamor for butterflies, and the next they send orders for snow sledges. There can never be any real honest climate in that section until the zephyrs begin to produce mosquitoes.

The negro continues to receive attention, as previously in the *News*:

A negro baby was drowned in a washtub near Reidsville recently.

A negro woman is on trial in Macon for murdering her baby. This goes to show that the colored people have no rights in Georgia. They are not allowed to murder their own children. When will this oppression cease?

Few men could have stood, as did Mr. Harris, the steady test of more than a decade in this kind of work, which de-

manded, above all else, freshness and spontaneity. It may well have been he, speaking from his heart, who in 1878 wrote this among the paragraphs: "Bill Arp's letters are having a big run throughout the country. His homely, unpretending humor is quite refreshing after this long season of nervous newspaper wit." And Bill Arp added to his next letter the following pleasant postscript:

I met Harris at the Kimball, and he wouldn't eat nothin' but fish. He said it was brain food; and if he didn't eat sheephead twice a day, he couldn't nigh get up them brilliant paragraphs. I thought I diskivered sheephead in 'em. Do keep him in fish!—B. A.<sup>2</sup>

But Mr. Harris had also to contribute other matter to the *Constitution* in response to various assignments made by the directing editor, and he often wrote a special contribution at his own pleasure. Sometimes it was a "heavy political leader"; sometimes it was a humorous paragraph "filler" for the editorial page; again it was a prose poem in the editorial column for Sunday. Occasionally he was sent away to conduct special correspondence.<sup>3</sup> The *Constitution*, always concerned in the interests of literature, significantly intrusted to him its reviews of magazines and new books and other literary discussions.<sup>4</sup> Humor was a distinguishing characteristic of practically everything he wrote, yet an

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<sup>1</sup>Weekly *Constitution*, June 25, 1878.

<sup>2</sup>Weekly *Constitution*, July 2, 1878.

<sup>3</sup>Weekly *Constitution*, September 17, 1878, "Political Correspondence from the Barnesville Convention," J. C. H.; *Constitution*, August 3, 1878, Gainesville; June 20ff., 1880, Cincinnati.

<sup>4</sup>"Mr. Harris can compass anything in newspaperdom from a strong editorial to a pungent paragraph. . . . His book reviews are scholarly and charming, with a vein of delicious humor and quaint reflection." ("History of Georgia," I. W. Avery, 1881, page 614.) Mr. Avery was for some time (up to 1847) editor of the *Constitution*.



Augusta (Georgia) editor who knew wrote: "Who ever recalled a spiteful or malicious paragraph from Joe Harris's pen?" Henry Grady said: "He has developed a spirit of humor, gentle, tender, and sportive, that is equal to the best of Willis's and recalls Irwin and Lamb."<sup>1</sup> Verses with his signature appeared occasionally. During 1877 he wrote several special stories<sup>2</sup> for the *Sunday Constitution* which betokened his successful short stories of later years, though, doubtless as a kind of apology for these efforts, in connection with one he said:

If I were writing you a story, I might go on and elaborate these things, as is the custom of those who give themselves over to the fascinations of fiction; but as I am writing of that which is known to hundreds who read the *Constitution*, I prefer to confine myself to a prosy narrative of facts, but at the same time I propose to narrate these facts in my own way.<sup>3</sup>

The next year the *Constitution* came out one day with the following announcement:

#### A NEW LITERARY ATTRACTION<sup>4</sup>

A serial story to run several months, entitled "The Romance of Rockville," will shortly appear in the Sunday edition of the daily *Constitution* and the weekly *Constitution*. This may be regarded as the inauguration of a new feature of the *Constitution*, for we propose to make the original literary matter of the paper as attractive as its political and news departments. The scene of "The Romance of Rockville" will be laid in Georgia, and it will embody the peculiar features of life and society in the South anterior to the war.

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<sup>1</sup>Henry W. Grady, as quoted in H. Clay Lukens's "Don't Give It Away."

<sup>2</sup>These stories are reproduced in Part II.

<sup>3</sup>"One Man's History," June 3, 1877.

<sup>4</sup>*Constitution*, March 7, 1878 (editorial).

It will, in short, be a study of Southern character. We certainly need not say more to commend it to our present readers than to add that its author is Mr. J. C. Harris, of the *Constitution* staff and the author of "Uncle Remus's Revival Hymn" and other literary efforts that have been received with a remarkable degree of favor from one end of the country to the other. We hazard nothing in asserting that the hymn referred to was more freely copied in this country than any other literary effort of the past year. So popular did it become that it was published in *Harper's Monthly* as the production of a man who had appropriated it for that purpose.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Harris will put into the new story his never-failing humor and his thorough knowledge of Southern character. It will be perhaps his most ambitious effort, and all who desire to read it should without delay get into communication with the business manager of the *Constitution*.

This announcement was greeted far and wide with a hearty welcome. When reference was again made to the matter in the *Constitution*, a solid column of press notices, thirty or more, complimentary to Harris and anticipatory of his serial story, was published.<sup>2</sup> "The Romance of Rockville," a novelette of fifty thousand words, was published through the *Weekly Constitution* from April 16 to September 10, 1878. It was a promising piece of work, indicating the author's powers of sustained narrative that were to be further developed in his later life. Indeed, "Sister Jane" was based upon the central incident in the plot of this story, and a parallel study of the two is interesting.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Harris, having begun his career, like Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and W. D. Howells, at the printer's case, and having passed from apprenticeship into maturity as a journalist, was now, however much he might disclaim the honor,

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<sup>1</sup>See later reference to this on page 130.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, March 31, 1878; *Weekly Constitution*, April 2, 1878.

<sup>3</sup>"The Romance of Rockville" is reproduced in Part II.

advancing some of his work in that capacity to the threshold of literature. The brilliant Grady, his colleague, declared: "Through his jagged and crude work of daily journalism there shines the divine light of genius."<sup>1</sup> And Colonel Thompson at the same time said: "He is, to my mind, one of our most promising writers. You see what he has done and is doing, but he is capable of far superior work and will ere long prove it to the world."<sup>2</sup> Striving to do for his paper, largely along the line of his natural inclination from youth, something more than the mere tasks assigned to him, he was astonished one day to find that in so doing he had, in the opinion of those who knew, served a higher apprenticeship and that the great publishers of the North were anxious for contributions from him. However, it was not along the beaten path of prose fiction that he was to proceed first into the higher realm. There was another line of service to his paper through which his distinctive genius would lead him, amazed and embarrassed, into the company of those writers who are immortal.

During October, 1876, there were a number of changes in the *Constitution*. Among others, there was one which resulted in the creation of "Uncle Remus." The files of the paper show that it had for some time recognized the interest attaching to the old-time negro. Space on the editorial page was regularly reserved for what purported to be humorous interviews upon topics of the day with an ante-bellum dandy called "Old Si," who thus had become an established figure for the *Constitution's* readers. "Old Si" was none other than Sam W. Small, a regular member of the staff. On October 14 Mr. Small's contract with the paper expired;

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<sup>1</sup>Henry W. Grady, as quoted in H. Clay Lukens's "Don't Give It Away." 1879.

<sup>2</sup>W. T. Thompson, in Lukens's "Don't Give It Away."

and when a new contract could not be agreed upon, he went over to the Sunday morning *Herald*, buying an interest in the same.<sup>1</sup> "Old Si" was announced to appear thereafter regularly in the *Herald*.<sup>2</sup> Whereupon the *Constitution* felt the need of its accustomed sketches in negro dialect. In this emergency Captain Howell turned to Mr. Harris and asked him if he could not continue the work previously done by Mr. Small. Mr. Harris replied that he would not undertake just what Mr. Small had been doing, but would try something.<sup>3</sup> The last "Old Si" sketch had appeared in the issue of September 29. On October 26 "Old Si's" space was occupied by "Jeems Robinson." This sketch was the beginning of Joel Chandler Harris's negro dialect work. And so, with slight changes, among them the introduction of "Uncle Remus" and the change of caption to "Jeems Rober'son's Last Illness," it begins the series of "Sayings" as collected later in his first published volume.

Of course Mr. Harris had to go through a period of experimentation before he was able to create his great character. Following the sketch referred to above, appeared on succeeding days "Cracker," "Dago," "Dutchman," and normal English sketches, probably his efforts. The name "Remus"—not "Uncle Remus"—first appeared incidentally at the close of "Politics and Provisions," October 31. And the "Uncle Remus" caption, afterwards used regularly, was first used in "Uncle Remus's Politics" November 28; though when Mr. Harris came to publish his book, this sketch was not taken, doubtless because the author had come to see that it, like all of "Old Si," was too patently the white man trying to express his ideas in negro language rather than the nat-

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<sup>1</sup>See *Constitution*, October 25, 1876, "Personal to the Public."

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, October 29, 1876.

<sup>3</sup>Account of the conversation given by Mrs. Harris to the author. Mr. Clark Howell thinks that Mr. Harris volunteered this service.

ural talk of the negro. This sketch, therefore, is significant in the evolution of "Uncle Remus"; and so it is here reproduced, together with a typical "Old Si":

"OLD SI" ON HAYES<sup>1</sup>

We stopped at the post office yesterday to hear Old Si expound politics.

"It's de born truf, sah," he urged. "De readin' niggers is dead sot 'ginst 'em;!"

"Against whom, Si?" we ventured.

"'Ginst dis hyar 'publican party, sah. Dey is, fur a fact!"

"Why is that? What's the trouble?"

"Hez you tuck de time, sah, ter read dat ar letter from de 'publican candidate? Mister Hazes—I t'ink dat's what dey's a-callin' ob him."

"Yes, we read it carefully."

"Did you see any declamations in dat letter 'bout de fifteenf remembymment an' de Affican citizan, sah?"

"We don't remember."

"Dar it is, sah. De nigger he watches mighty close fur dat, an' lo! an' beholden, sah, an' it tain't dar! Dat's what's de matter now, jess shore!"

"Well, what's the trouble about?"

"De trouble am dat man don't onderstand de nigger. He nebber owned no niggers; what do he knows 'bout 'em? Anybody dat knows a nigger, knows dat he'd rudder be 'bused twice dan lef' alone once. Mr. Hazes done lef' 'em alone now, and dey'll lef' him alone when de 'lection comes. Dat's business!"

Two other negroes nodded to us approvingly, and we had gained a new campaign idea.

UNCLE REMUS'S POLITICS<sup>2</sup>

"You ain't heerd de news, is you?" asked a well-dressed ducky of old Uncle Remus yesterday.

"W'at news is dat?"

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<sup>1</sup>*Constitution*, July 21, 1876.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, November 28, 1876.

"Why, Giner'l Grant's gwine ter 'naugarate Chamberlain."

"Gwine ter do w'ich?"

"Gwine ter 'naugarate Chamberlain."

"Who's Chamberlain?"

"Dat Souf Carliny man."

"En' who's gwine ter 'naugarate Grant?"

"Dunno. Hayes, I spec."

"Well, dey ain't no kin ter me," said Uncle Remus thoughtfully, "an' I ain't oneasy 'bout none uv 'em. Gimme a two-dollar bill, an' I'm in favor uv free guv'ment and red licker right erlong; but w'en I'm a-hankerin' arter a dram I kinder disremember w'ich is w'ich an' who is who, an' dat's de d'sease what I got now." And then Uncle Remus walked off singing:

"We is all a-waitin' fer de las' great day,

Oh, Lord! Hallylujarum!

But hit ain't no use fer de niggers fer ter stay,

Oh, Lord! Hallylujarum!

No use fer ter wait fer de glory crown

While Gabrile's a-shoooin' dem angels all aroun',

Oh, Lord! Hallylujarum!"

This kind of character sketch, then, was the first thing that Mr. Harris attempted in negro dialect, and he continued it with increasing success after Mr. Small, some months later, returned with "Old Si" to the *Constitution*.<sup>1</sup> "Uncle Remus Succumbs to the Epidemic," May 3, 1878, followed the author's sickness with the measles, and is to be found in his book as "A Case of Measles" ("Sayings," X.). In the book are reproduced twenty-one of these sketches, published in the *Constitution* before 1880, which show how Mr. Harris had mastered the work. Says he:

The difference between the dialect of the legends and that of the character sketches, slight as it is, marks the modifica-

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<sup>1</sup>January 30, 1877. See the *Constitution* of that date. "Old Si" continued for some years to appear in the *Constitution* irregularly.

tions which the speech of the negro has undergone even where education has played no part in reforming it. Indeed, save in the remote country districts, the dialect of the legends has nearly disappeared. I am perfectly well aware that the character sketches are without permanent interest, but they are embodied here for the purpose of presenting a phase of negro character wholly distinct from that which I have endeavored to preserve in the legends. Only in this shape and with all the local allusions would it be possible adequately to represent the shrewd observations, the curious retorts, the homely thrusts, the quaint comments, and the humorous philosophy of the race of which Uncle Remus is the type.<sup>1</sup>

Sidney Lanier, who was, like Mr. Harris, a native of Middle Georgia, wrote:

Uncle Remus, a famous colored philosopher of Atlanta, . . . is a fiction so founded upon fact and so like it as to have passed into true citizenship and authority along with Bottom and Autolycus; . . . it is real negro talk and not that supposititious negro minstrel talk which so often goes for the original. It is as nearly perfect as any dialect can well be. . . . Nothing could be at once more fine in humor and pointed in philosophy.<sup>2</sup>

Yet Mr. Harris could never become unconscious of the artificiality in these sketches.<sup>3</sup> There was before him the work of Irwin Russell, whom he regarded as the pioneer of Southern writers in the literary representation of the negro. And it was Russell's accurate conception of character that drew forth his admiration. "The dialect is not always the best; it is often carelessly written," writes Mr. Harris; "but the negro is there, the old-fashioned, unadulterated negro,

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<sup>1</sup>"Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings," Introduction, xvi.

<sup>2</sup>*Scribner's Monthly*, Vol. XX., page 847 (October, 1880), "The New South," Sidney Lanier.

<sup>3</sup>*Constitution*, September 17, 23, 1879.

who is still dear to the Southern heart."<sup>1</sup> So it was Mr. Harris's great desire faithfully to present the negro, and to that achievement he advanced as he took up new phases of the character.

When Mr. Small again had "Old Si" talking through the columns of the *Constitution* upon contemporary affairs, Mr. Harris began to draw more upon his memory of the old plantation; to reproduce not only the language, but also the thought of the old negroes. During the year 1877 he published several dialect songs. The sketch reproduced above closed with Uncle Remus's singing. That stanza was Mr. Harris's first experiment. For some reason it was not included among those given in the book. On January 11, 1877, the sketch "Politics and Collection Plates" closes with Uncle Remus's singing a stanza, to which, on January 18, were added three other stanzas, making up "Uncle Remus's Revival Hymn." Since the book form shows interesting changes that indicate the keen observation which made Mr. Harris, according to universal verdict, the most perfect master of the negro dialect, and for the sake of preserving the original, the *Constitution* form is here reproduced:

#### UNCLE REMUS'S REVIVAL HYMN<sup>2</sup>

Oh, whar shill we go w'en de great day comes,  
Wid de blowin' uv de trumpits an' de bangin' uv de drums?  
How menney po' sinners will be cotched out late  
An' fine no latch to de goldin gate?

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<sup>1</sup>"Poems by Irwin Russell." Harris's introduction. Two selections from Russell's contemporary work were published in the *Constitution* about the time Harris made his first efforts.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, January 18, 1877. Of course an occasional typographical error occurred. Mr. Harris once complained (*Constitution*, "Round about in Georgia," November 8, 1876): "The sketch writer of the *Constitution* is ill. He has endeavored to impress upon the Intelligent Compositor that the negroes use such a word as 'mout'; but the



No use fer ter wait 'twell to-morrer!  
 De sun mus'n't set on yo' sorrer;  
 Sin's ez sharp ez a bamboo brier—  
 Oh, Lord! fetch de mo'ners up higher!

W'en de nashuns uv de earf is a stannin' all aroun',  
 Who's a gwinter be chossen fer ter war de glory-crown?  
 Who's a gwine fer ter stan' stiff-kneed an' bol,  
 An' answer to dere name at de callin' uv de roll?  
 You better come now ef you comin'—  
 Ole Satun is loose an' a bummin'—  
 De wheels uv destruction is a hummin'—  
 Oh, come along, sinners, ef you comin'!

De song uv salvashun is a mighty sweet song,  
 An' de Pairidise wins blow fur an' blow strong,  
 An' Aberham's buzzum is saf' an' it's wide,  
 An' dat's de place whar de sinners oughter hide!  
 No use ter be stoppin' an' a lookin';  
 Ef you fool wid Satun you'll git took in;  
 You'll hang on de edge an' git shook in,  
 Ef you keep on a stoppin' an' a lookin'.

De time is right now, an' dis here's de place—  
 Let de salvashun sun shine squar' in yo' face;  
 Fight de battles uv de Lord, fight soon an' fight late,  
 An' you'll allers fine a latch to de goldin gate.  
 No use fer ter wait 'twell to-morrer;  
 De sun mus'n't set on yo' sorrer—  
 Sin's ez sharp ez a bamboo-brier;  
 Ax de Lord fer ter fetch you up higher!

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I. C. persistently asserts, in the glaring perversity of his daily typography, that the word is 'won't.' "Won't" was printed instead of "mout" in the sketch of November 7 preceding. But this was at the very beginning of Mr. Harris's work. Sam Small wrote of him: "He is laborious and careful in the preparation of his matter and has caused less profanity than almost any other high moral editor in the United States." Scrupulous effort has been made here, as in every other instance in this book, to reproduce the original form, letter for letter, as it appeared in the *Constitution*.

This song was recognized at once as a masterpiece. It was reprinted in papers all over the country. In the November (1877) *Harper's Monthly Magazine* it was published in "The Editor's Drawer" as the work of a man in Ilion, New York. This fact was discovered by the *Constitution*, whose editorial column of November 6 dealt briskly with the matter under the heading "A Literary Theft." The original form of the song was reproduced in full, and the first stanza of the mangled form from Ilion was shown. One paragraph of the editorial reads:

We cannot wonder at the Ilion man wanting the credit for producing so excellent and popular a piece of dialect work as this "Hymn." It has had as wide circulation in the press as any production of recent years, and the author has been written to from long distances for copies of it.<sup>1</sup>

The *Chicago Tribune* fell under the illusion that this was really one of the hymns "sung by negroes during religious excitement."<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Charles W. Hubner, of Atlanta, set the "Hymn" to music in a way that caused Mr. Harris to write to her: "It sings itself to me at all hours of the day, and I sing it to my children." It was this "Hymn" that first fixed upon Mr. Harris the name of "Uncle Remus," who now became another of the *Constitution's* established characters.<sup>3</sup> One month later came another song, almost equally as good as the former, "Uncle Remus's Camp Meeting Song."<sup>4</sup> In November the "Revival Hymn" was republished, as stated

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<sup>1</sup>See also *Constitution*, March 7, 1878. Editorial, "A New Literary Attraction," reproduced on page 121.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, December 2, 1879. When the songs are transcriptions, Mr. Harris so classifies them in his book.

<sup>3</sup>*Constitution*, "Announcement for 1878": "'Old Si' will continue to air his quaint philosophy, . . . and 'Uncle Remus' will occasionally warble one of his plantation songs."

<sup>4</sup>*Constitution*, February 18, 1877.

above. In December came "Uncle Remus's Corn-Shucking Song."<sup>1</sup> During most of the next year Mr. Harris was engaged with "The Romance of Rockville." But at the time of the concluding installment of that story, on September 8, 1878, the "Revival Hymn" was again republished; and on October 6 he produced "Uncle Remus's Plantation Play Song," of which the *Baltimore Gazette* said: "Finer than anything Joaquin Miller ever wrote." A transcription, "Time Goes by Turns," appeared July 27, 1879, and on October 12 the "Christmas Play Song as Sung by Uncle Remus." Then "The Plough-Hand's Song" was published in the issue of October 17, 1880, with the note: "Bartlett Place, Jasper County, 1857. From 'Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings,' by Joel Chandler Harris. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1880." (The book had not then come from the press.)<sup>2</sup>

The sketches and the songs presented very effectively certain phases of the negro character, but they would not have preserved the name of their author in literature. It was when he struck the treasure trove of folklore that his fame was made secure through all time to come. Mr. Harris in later life declared that his authorship was wholly accidental.<sup>3</sup> So it may have been, but it was such an accident as logically befell him. The circumstances were as follows: It being a part of Mr. Harris's work for the *Constitution* to review

<sup>1</sup>*Constitution*, December 30, 1877. Inquiries about references in this song were noted and answered February 6, 1879. Compare note in book.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, October 11, 1878.

<sup>3</sup>In discussing Sidney Lanier's "Science of English Verse" Mr. Harris made applications to "Uncle Remus's" songs. See *Constitution*, May 20, 1880, "Notes of New Books."

<sup>4</sup>*Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, April, 1886, Vol. XXXVII., page 417, "An Accidental Author," J. C. Harris.

books and current magazines, he came upon the December, 1877, number of *Lippincott's Magazine* and found an article which at once engaged his interest. His review of this *Magazine*, published in the editorial columns of the *Constitution* of November 21, 1877, included the following paragraph:

William Owens contributes an article on the "Folklore of the Southern Negroes," which is remarkable for what it omits rather than for what it contains. The author is at a loss even to account for the prefix "Buh," as he puts it, which the negroes give to the animals who figure in their stories, as "Buh Rabbit," "Buh Wolf," etc. We judge from the tone of Mr. Owens's article that he is familiar only with the lore of the nondescript beings who live on the coast; otherwise he would have no difficulty in determining the derivation of the word "Buh." The real Southern darky pronounces the word as though it were written "Brer," and he confines its use to the animals themselves. For instance: "Den, bimeby, Mr. Fox he see Mr. Rabbit comin' 'long, an' he say: 'Howdy, Brer Rabbit—how you gittin' 'long dese days?'" It is unquestionably a contraction of the word "brother."<sup>1</sup>

Harris could write with authority, because he had become familiar with the African myths and animal stories during his boyhood in old Putnam County. While in Forsyth the presence of eight hundred blacks to seven hundred whites gave him sufficient opportunity to keep his memory fresh. And in Savannah, where again the blacks were in the majority, he learned the coast negro, to whom Mr. Owens's knowledge seemed limited.<sup>2</sup> However, despite this superior

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<sup>1</sup>*Constitution*, November 21, 1877. But an examination of Mr. Harris's work shows that he did not follow this rule as to the use of "Brer."

<sup>2</sup>"Uncle Remus and the Savannah Darky" shows Harris's own knowledge of the coast negro. This sketch appeared in the *Constitution* November 14, 1876.

knowledge of his own, and though there had been published other discussions of folklore that came to his notice at least previous to the publication of his book,<sup>1</sup> he gives to Mr. Owens the credit of arousing in him a conception of the possibility of turning the material at his command to literary use. Says Harris:

It was on this [Turnwold] and neighboring plantations that I became familiar with the curious myths and animal stories. . . . I absorbed the stories, songs, and myths that I heard; but I had no idea of their literary value until, sometime in the seventies, *Lippincott's Magazine* printed an article on negro folklore containing rough outlines of some of the stories. This article gave me my cue, and the legends told by Uncle Remus are the result.<sup>2</sup>

It will be highly interesting and worth while to have before us one of the stories as written by Mr. Owens, the story of "The Tar Baby":

Of the "Buh" fables, that which is by all odds the greatest favorite and which appears in the greatest variety of forms is the "Story of Buh Rabbit and the Tar Baby." Each variation preserves the great landmarks, particularly the closing scene. According to the most thoroughly African version, it runs thus: Buh Rabbit and Buh Wolf are neighbors. In a conversation one day Buh Wolf proposes that they two shall dig a well for their joint benefit, instead of depending upon chance rainfalls or going to distant pools or branches, as they often have to do, to quench their thirst. To this Buh Rabbit, who has no fondness for labor, though willing enough to enjoy its fruits, offers various objections and finally gives a flat refusal.

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<sup>1</sup>See references in his Introduction to "Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings." See also *Popular Science Monthly*, April, 1881, "Plantation Folklore," T. F. Crane.

<sup>2</sup>*Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, April, 1886, Vol. XXXVII., page 417, "An Accidental Author," J. C. Harris.

"Well," says Buh Wolf, who perfectly understands his neighbor, "if you no help to dig well, you mustn't use de water."

"What for I gwine use de water?" responds Buh Rabbit with affected disdain.

"What use I got for well? In de mornin' I drink de dew, an' in middle o' day I drink from de cow tracks."

The well is dug by Buh Wolf alone, who after a while perceives that some one besides himself draws from it. He watches and soon identifies the intruder as Buh Rabbit, who makes his visits by night. "Ebery mornin' he see Buh Rabbit tracks—ebery mornin' Buh Rabbit tracks." Indignant at the intrusion, he resolves to set a trap for his thievish neighbor and to put him to death. Knowing Buh Rabbit's buckish love for the ladies, he fits up a tar baby, made to look like a beautiful girl, and sets it near the well. By what magical process this manufacture of an attractive-looking young lady out of treacherous adhesive tar is accomplished we are not informed. But listeners to stories must not be inquisitive about the mysterious parts; they must be content to hear.

Buh Rabbit, emboldened by long impunity, goes to the well as usual after dark, sees this beautiful creature standing there motionless, peeps at it time and again suspiciously, but, being satisfied that it is really a young lady, he makes a polite bow and addresses her in gallant language. The young lady makes no reply. This encourages him to ask if he may not come to take a kiss. Still no reply. He sets his water bucket on the ground, marches up boldly and obtains a kiss, but finds to his surprise that he cannot get away. His lips are held fast by the tar. He struggles and tries to persuade her to let him go. How he is able to speak with his lips sticking fast is another unexplained mystery; but no matter, he does speak, and most eloquently, yet in vain. He now changes his tone and threatens her with a slap. Still no answer. He administers the slap, and his hand sticks fast. One after the other, both hands and both feet, as well as his mouth, are thus caught, and poor Buh Rabbit remains a prisoner until Buh Wolf comes the next morning to draw water.

"Eh! eh! Buh Rabbit, wah de matter?" exclaims Buh Wolf, affecting the greatest surprise at his neighbor's woe-ful plight.

Buh Rabbit, who has as little regard for truth as for honesty, replies, attempting to throw all the blame upon the deceitful maiden by whom he has been entrapped, not even suspecting yet—so we are to infer—that she is made of tar instead of living flesh. He declares with all the earnestness of injured innocence that he was passing by in the sweet, honest moonlight in pursuit of his lawful business when this girl hailed him and decoyed him into giving her a kiss and was now holding him in unlawful durance.

The listener ironically commiserates his captive neighbor and proposes to set him free, when, suddenly noticing the water bucket and the tracks by the well, he charges Buh Rabbit with his repeated robberies by night and concludes by declaring his intention to put him to immediate death.

The case has now become pretty serious; and Buh Rabbit is, of course, woefully troubled at the near approach of the great catastrophe. Still, even in this dire extremity, his wits do not cease to cheer him with some hope of escape. Seeing that his captor is preparing to hang him—for the cord is already around his neck, and he is being dragged toward an overhanging limb—he expresses the greatest joy by capering, dancing, and clapping his hands, so much so that the other curiously inquires: "What for you so glad, Buh Rabbit?"

"Oh," replies the sly hypocrite, "because you gwine hang me and not trow me in de brier-bush."

"What for I mustn't trow you in de brier-bush?" inquires Mr. Simpleton Wolf.

"Oh," prays Buh Rabbit with a doleful whimper, "please hang me. Please trow me in de water or trow me in de fire, where I die at once. But don't—oh don't—trow me in de brier-bush to tear my poor flesh from off my bones!"

"I gwine to do 'zactly wat you ax me not to do," returns Buh Wolf in savage tone. Then, going to a neighboring patch of thick, strong briars, he pitches Buh Rabbit headlong in the midst and says: "Now let's see de flesh come off de bones."

No sooner, however, does the struggling and protesting Buh Rabbit find himself among the briers than he slides gently to the ground; and, peeping at his would-be torturer from a safe place behind the stems, he says: "Tankee, Buh Wolf—a tousand tankee—for bring me home. De brier-bush de berry place where I been born."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Harris did not begin immediately and without deliberation to publish folklore. For more than a year he was recalling the old tales, writing them out in practice, and providing for them a desirable setting. We remember how peculiarly intimate and affectionate had been the relationship of this "morbidly sensitive" boy—who had also a "strange sympathy with animals of all kinds"—with the simple-minded, warm-hearted old slaves who "used to sit at night and amuse the children with . . . reminiscences and . . . stories." Instinctively, then, and with the wisdom of genius he committed the narration of the legends to a venerable ex-slave who had only fond memories of the former period. This genuine old negro, with his general proprietary attitude toward whatever was his beloved former master's and with his unoffensive air of superiority natural and becoming to such a character, charms the little boy of the new generation by unfolding to him the mysteries of plantation lore. And thus the erstwhile printer and temporary journalist was now about to perpetuate in abiding literature, for the happiness of succeeding generations, the old-time association of the negroes, the children, and the animals. The negro dialect was to be used because, said he, "the dialect is a part of the legends themselves, and to present them in any other way would be to rob them of everything that

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<sup>1</sup>Reproduced from *Lippincott's Magazine*, by permission from the publishers.



gives them vitality."<sup>1</sup> And, of course, it was "Uncle Remus," already known and loved both South and North for his "Sayings" and "Songs," whom Mr. Harris now introduced with his "Negro Folklore," publishing in the *Constitution* of July 20, 1879, "The Story of Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Fox as Told by Uncle Remus."<sup>2</sup> Of "Uncle Remus" Mr. Harris once said he was "a human syndicate . . . of three or four old darkies whom I had known. I just walloped them together into one person and called him Uncle Remus."<sup>3</sup>

Of the ideal portrait of the character painted by Mr. James Henry Moser he said:

It is really a notable piece of work. Its characteristics are typical, so much so that the first impression of those who are familiar with the peculiarities of the negro is that it is painted from life and that they have seen the original. . . . Although the negro features are broadly emphasized, the face is not without a certain suggestion of intellectual possibilities; and while it is full of humor—not the humor of the artist, but the humor of the type—a certain shrewd reserve makes itself apparent. The portrait, in short, is a serious attempt to reproduce the characteristics of the old plantation negro, so dear to the memory of the Southern people, and the result is the only genuine reproduction of the typical negro we have ever seen upon canvas. The painting is full of that quaintly pathetic dignity that cannot be described in words. Singular as it may seem, the face is almost identical with that which had identified itself with Uncle Remus in the mind of the author of the sketches, and an engraving of the portrait will appear in the forthcoming volume, to be issued by the Appletons.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Nights with Uncle Remus," Introduction, page xxxii.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, July 20, 1879, and "Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings," first legend.

<sup>3</sup>Boston *Globe*, November 3, 1907.

<sup>4</sup>*Constitution*, May 9, 1880 (editorial column).

The first story was thrown out, as it were, to test the popular fancy. Nor did Mr. Harris offer another until he had read the exchanges and awaited for four months the expressive response from readers. In his self-criticism he was severe;<sup>1</sup> but he must have felt very much encouraged when, along with words of praise from all sides, he read in the Cartersville (Georgia) *Free Press* the following:

We heard a most distinguished gentleman (it was the Hon. A. H. Stephens) remark last Friday that "Uncle Remus" (who is Mr. J. C. Harris, of the *Atlanta Constitution*) was one of the most original and natural characters now before the public. Furthermore, Mr. Stephens said he wanted all of Uncle Remus's articles to put in his scrap-book for preservation, and Joe Harris ought to feel proud of the compliment.<sup>2</sup>

Soon afterwards Mr. Harris gave the second story under "Uncle Remus's Folklore: Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox, and the Tar Baby."<sup>3</sup> Students of folklore claim to have traced this legend back to the Sanskrit and to Buddha, four hundred and seventy years before Christ, but never had there been imparted to it such picturesque beauty and charm as now. Henceforth an Uncle Remus tale was a regular feature of the Sunday and Weekly *Constitution*, being devoured by old and young in thousands of homes. There are to-day few men or women in the South of the mature generation who cannot recall the joy that the Atlanta paper with these animal stories brought every week into their hearts, and it has been pointed out elsewhere how they have carried delight

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<sup>1</sup>*Constitution*, September 17, 23, 1879; January 20, 1880. See page 145.

<sup>2</sup>*Cartersville Free Press*, as quoted in the *Constitution* September 26, 1879.

<sup>3</sup>*Constitution*, November 16, 1879, and "Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings," second legend.

around the world.<sup>1</sup> The original *Constitution* form of Legends I., II., and IV. are here reproduced:

### NEGRO FOLKLORE<sup>2</sup>

THE STORY OF MR. RABBIT AND MR. FOX, AS TOLD BY UNCLE REMUS

#### I

*Yesterday* the lady whom Uncle Remus calls "Miss Sally" missed her little six-year-old. Making search for him through the house, she heard the sound of voices *on the back piazza* and, looking through the window, saw the child sitting by Uncle Remus. His head rested against the old man's arm, and he was gazing with an expression of the most intense interest into the rough, weather-beaten face that beamed so kindly upon him. This is what "Miss Sally" heard:

"Bimeby, one day, arter *Mr. Fox* bin doin' all dat he could fer ter ketch *Mr. Rabbit*, *an'* *Mr. Rabbit* bin doin' all he could to keep 'im fum it, *Mr. Fox* say to hisse'f dat he'd put up a game on *Mr. Rabbit*; *an'* he *hadn't* mo'n got de wuds out'n his mouf *twell Mr. Rabbit* come a-lopin' up de big road lookin' [des] ez plump *an'* ez fat *an'* ez sassy ez a *Morgan* hoss in a barley patch.

"'Hol' on dar, Brer Rabbit,' sez *Mr. Fox*, sezee.

"'I ain't got time, Brer Fox,' sez *Mr. Rabbit*, sezee, sorter mendin' his licks.

"'But I wanten have some confab wid you, Brer Rabbit,' [sez Brer Fox,] sezee.

"'All right, Brer Fox; but you better holler fum whar you stan'. I'm *monst'us* full *wv* fleas dis mawnin,' [sez Brer Rabbit,] sezee.

"'I seed Brer B'ar yistiddy,' sez *Mr. Fox*, sezee, 'an' he sorter *raked* me over de coals kase you *an'* me *didn't* make frens *an'* live naberly, *an'* I *tole* 'im dat I'd see you.'

<sup>1</sup>Introduction to the present volume.

<sup>2</sup>Scrupulous effort has been made to reproduce, letter for letter, the original *Constitution* form. See footnote on page 129. Italics have been used in this first legend to indicate forms that are changed in the book; brackets indicate insertions made in the book.

"Den *Mr. Rabbit* scratch one year wid his off hine foot sorter jub'usly, *an'* den he ups *an'* sez, sezee:

"'All a-settin', *Brer Fox*. Spose'n you drap roun' ter-morrer *an'* take dinner wid me. We ain't got no great doin's at our house, but I speck de ole 'oman *an'* de chilluns kin sorter scramble roun' *an'* git up sump'n fer ter stay yo' stummuck.'

"'I'm 'gree'ble, *Brer Rabbit*,' sez *Mr. Fox*, sezee.

"'Den I'll 'pen' on you,' sez *Mr. Rabbit*, sezee.

"Nex' day *Mr. Rabbit* an' *Miss Rabbit* got up soon, 'fo' day, *an'* raided on a gyarden, like *Miss Sally's* out dar, *an'* got some *cabbage*, *an'* some roas'n years, *an'* some sparrer-grass, *an'* dey *fixed* up a smashin' dinner. Bimeby one er de little *Rabbits*, playin' out in de back yard, come runnin' in hollerin': 'Oh ma! Oh ma! I seed *Mr. Fox* a-comin'!' *An'* den *Mr. Rabbit* he tuck de chilluns by *dere* years *an'* made um set down, *an'* den him *an'* *Miss Rabbit* sorter *dallied* roun' waitin' for *Mr. Fox*. *An'* dey *kep'* on waitin', but no *Mr. Fox* [ain't come]. *Arter* 'while *Mr. Rabbit* goes to de do', easylike, *an'* peep out; *an'* dar, stickin' out fum *behine* de cornder, wuz de tip eend uv *Brer Fox's* tail. Den *Mr. Rabbit* shot de do' *an'* sot down *an'* put his paws *behine* his years *an'* begin fer ter sing:

"'De place wharbouts you spill de grease,  
Right dar youer boun' ter slide;  
An' whar you fine a bunch uv ha'r,  
You'll sholy fine de hide.'

"Nex' day *Mr. Fox* sont word by *Mr. Mink* *an'* skuse hisse'f kase he wuz too sick fer ter come, *an'* he ax *Mr. Rabbit* fer to come *an'* eat dinner wid him, *an'* *Mr. Rabbit* say he wuz 'gree'ble.

"Bimeby, *when* de shadders wuz at *dere* shortes', *Mr. Rabbit* he sorter *bresh* up *an'* santer down unto *Mr. Fox's* house; *an'* *when* he got dar, he hear somebody groanin', *an'* he look in de door, *an'* dar he see *Mr. Fox* settin' up in a rockin' cheer all *wrapped* up wid *flannels*, *an'* he look mighty weak. *Mr. Rabbit* look all 'roun', [he did,] but he *don't* see no dinner. De dish pan *was* settin' on de table, *an'* close by *was* a *kyarvin'* knife.

"'Look like you gwinter have chicken fer dinner, Brer Fox,' sez *Mr. Rabbit*, sezee.

"'Yes, Brer Rabbit. Deyer nice, *an'* fresh, *an'* tender,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"Den *Mr. Rabbit* sorter pull his *mustash*, *an'* sez: 'You ain't got no calamus root, is you, Brer Fox? I [done] got so now *that* I can't eat no chicken '*cept* she's seasoned up wid calamus root.' *An'* wid dat *Mr. Rabbit* lipt out er de do' and *dodged* 'mong de bushes *an'* sot dar watchin' fer *Mr. Fox*; *an'* he *didn't* watch long nudder, kase *Mr. Fox* flung off de *flannels* *an'* crope out er de house *an'* got whar he could cloze in on *Mr. Rabbit*, *an'* bimeby *Mr. Rabbit* *hol-lered* out: 'O Brer Fox! I'll [des] put yo' calamus root out *here* on *dis* [yer] stump. Better come git it while hit's fresh,' and wid dat *Mr. Rabbit* *galloped* off home. *An'* *Mr. Fox* ain't never *cotch* 'im yit; *an'*, w'at's *more*, honey, he ain't gwinter."

### UNCLE REMUS FOLKLORE

#### BRER RABBIT, BRER FOX, AND THE TAR BABY

##### II

"Didn't the fox *never* catch the rabbit, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy to whom the old man delights to relate his stories.

"He come mighty nigh it, honey, sho's you bawn—Brer Fox did. One day atter Brer Rabbit fooled 'im wid dat calamus root Brer Fox went ter wuk en got 'im some tar, en mixt it wid some turkentime, en fixt up a contrapshun dat he call a Tar Baby; en he tuck dis yer Tar Baby en sot 'er in de big road, den he laid off in de bushes fer to see wat de news wuz gwine to be. En he didn't hatter wait long, nudder, caze bimeby here come Brer Rabbit pacin' down de road lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity, des ez sassy ez a hotel nigger. Brer Fox he lay low. Brer Rabbit come prancin' 'long twell he spied de Tar Baby, en den he fotch up on his behime legs like he wuz 'stonished. De Tar Baby he sot dar, en Brer Fox he lay low.

"'Mawnin',' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Nice wedder dis mawnin',' sezee.

"Tar Baby ain't sayin' nothin', en Brer Fox he lay low.

" 'How duz yo' sym'tums seem ter segashuate?' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

"Brer Fox he wink his eye slow en lay low, en de Tar Baby he ain't sayin' nuthin'.

" 'How you come on, den? Is you deaf?' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Caze ef you is, I kin holler louder,' sezee.

"Tar Baby keep quiet, en Brer Fox he lay low.

" 'Youer stuck up, dat's w'at you is,' says Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'en I'm gwine to kyore you, dat's w'at I'm a gwineter do,' sezee.

"Brer Fox he sorter chuckle in his stummuck, but Tar Baby ain't sayin' nuthin'.

" 'I'm gwineter larn you howter talk ter 'spectoble people ef hit's de las' ack,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. 'Ef you don't take off dat hat en tell me howdy, I'm gwineter bus' you wide open,' sezee.

"Tar Baby set still, en Brer Fox he lay low.

"Brer Rabbit keep on axin' 'im, en de Tar Baby keep on sayin' nuthin', twell present'y Brer Rabbit draw back wid his fis', en blip! he tuck him side er de head. Right dar's whar he broke his molassas jug. His fis' stuck, en he couldn't pull loose. De tar hilt 'im.

" 'If you don't lemme loose, I'll hit you agin,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, en wid dat he fotch him a wipe wid de udder han', en dat stuck. Brer Fox he lay low.

" 'Turn me loose fo' I kick de natal stuffin' outen you,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee; but de Tar Baby hilt on, en den Brer Rabbit los' de use un his feet in de same way. Brer Fox he lay low. Den Brer Rabbit squalled out dat ef de Tar Baby didn't turn 'im loose he'd butt him crank-sided. En he butted, en his head got fastened. Den Brer Fox he sa'ntered fort' lookin' des ez innercent ez wunner yo' mammy's mockin' birds.

" 'Howdy, Brer Rabbit,' sez Brer Fox, sezee. 'You look sorter stuck up dis mawnin',' sezee; en den he rolled on de groun' en laft en laft twell he couldn't laff no mo'. 'I speck you'll take dinner wid me dis time, Brer Rabbit. I done laid in some calamus root, en I ain't gwineter take no skuse,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

Here Uncle Remus paused and drew a two-pound yam out of the ashes.

"Did the fox eat the rabbit?" asked the little boy to whom the story had been told.

"Dat's all de fur de tale goes," replied the old man. "He mout, en den agin he moutent. Some say Jedge B'ar come 'long en loosed 'im; some say he didn't. I hear Miss Sally callin'. You better run 'long."

### UNCLE REMUS FOLKLORE

#### SHOWING HOW BRER RABBIT WAS TOO SHARP FOR BRER FOX

#### IV

"Uncle Remus," said the little boy who plays the part of an appreciative audience to the old man, "did the fox kill and eat the rabbit when he caught him with the Tar Baby?"

"Law, honey, didn't I tell you 'bout dat?" replied the old darky, chuckling slyly. "I 'clar' ter grashus, I ought er tole you dat; but old man Nod wuz ridin' on my eyelids twell a little moen I'd a dis'member'd my own name, en den on to dat here come yo' mammy hollerin' atter you.

"W'at I tell you w'en I fus' begin? I tole you Brer Rabbit wuz a monstus soon beas'—leas'ways dat's w'at I laid out fer ter tell you. Well, den, honey, don't you go en make no udder calkalashuns, kaze in dem days Mr. Rabbit en his fambly wuz at de head er de gang w'en enny racket wuz on han,' en dar dey stayed. 'Fo' you begins fer ter wipe yo' eyes 'bout Mr. Rabbit, you wait en see whar'bouts Mr. Rabbit gwine ter fetch up at. But dat's needer here ner dar.

"W'en Brer Fox fine Brer Rabbit mixt up wid de Tar Baby, he feel mighty good, en he roll on de groun' en laff. Bimeby he up'n say, sezee:

"Well, I speck I got you dis time, Brer Rabbit,' sezee. 'Maybe I ain't, but I speck I is. You been runnin' roun' here sassin' atter me a mighty long time, but I speck you done come ter de end er de row. You bin cuttin' up yo' capers en bouncin' roun' in dis naberhood ontwell you come ter b'leeve yo'sef de boss er de whole gang. En den youer allers some'rs whar you got no bizness,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

'Who axed you fer ter come en strike up a 'quaintance wid dis yer Tar Baby? En who stuck you up dar whar you iz? Nobody in de roun' worril. You des tuck en jamed yo'se'f on dat Tar Baby widout waitin' fer enny invite,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en dar you is; en dar you'll stay twell I fixes up a bresh pile and fires her up, fer I'm gwineter barbecue you dis day, sho',' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

"Den Brer Rabbit talk mighty 'umble.

"'I don't keer w'at you do wid me, Brer Fox,' sezee, 'so you don't fling me in dat brier patch. Roas' me, Brer Fox,' sezee, 'but don't fling me in dat brier patch,' sezee.

"'Hit's so much trouble fer ter kindle a fire,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'dat I speck I'll hatter hang you,' sezee.

"'Hang me des ez high as you please, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'but do, fer de Lord's sake, don't fling me in dat brier patch,' sezee.

"'I ain't got no string,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en now I speck I'll hatter drown you,' sezee.

"'Drown me des ez deep ez you please, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'but do don't fling me in dat brier patch,' sezee.

"'Dey ain't no water nigh,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en now I speck I'll hatter skin you,' sezee.

"'Skin me, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee; 'snatch out my eyeballs, t'ar out my years by de roots, an' cut off my legs,' sezee, 'but do please, Brer Fox, don't fling me in dat brier patch,' sezee.

"Co'se Brer Fox wanter hurt Brer Rabbit bad ez he kin, so he cotch 'im by de behime legs en slung 'im right in de middle er de brier patch. Dar wuz a considerbul flutter whar Brer Rabbit struck de bushes, en Brer Fox sorter hang 'roun' fer ter see w'at wuz gwineter happen. Bimeby he hear somebody call 'im, en 'way up de hill he see Brer Rabbit settin' cross-legged on a chinkapin log koamin' de pitch ouden his har wid a chip. Den Brer Fox know dat he'd ben swopt off mighty bad. Brer Rabbit wuz bleedzed fer ter fling back some er his sass, en he holler out:

"'I gotter go home en bresh up fer Sunday, Brer Fox,' sezee, 'but I'll see you later. So long! Be sho' en save me some er dat calamus root!' sezee, en wid dat he skipt out des ez lively ez a cricket in de embers."



The creation of "Uncle Remus" was now perfected. But Mr. Harris had never conceived of the magnitude of this achievement, nor had he the faintest fancy of the fame that it would immediately bring to him. So late as two months after he had published the first folklore tales, though doubtless thinking rather of the sketches, he depreciated his work thus:

A correspondent of the Milledgeville *Union and Recorder* has some remarks on the negro dialect as it appears in the newspapers, which, so far as they apply to "Uncle Remus," are eminently just and proper. It will not be considered invidious for the writer hereof to say that, so far as the efforts of "Uncle Remus" to reproduce the dialect of the old plantation negro—the flavor and essence of his thought and style—are concerned, they are flat and dismal failures from beginning to end—no more representative in an artistic sense than the stale jokes of the end man of a negro minstrel show.<sup>1</sup>

Several months later he referred to the legends as "trifles."<sup>2</sup> But trifles never took hold upon men and women and children as did these tales, and in the face of a universal popular verdict no dictum from the critics was needed to bring men to a recognition of the value of this contribution to American literature.

The creation of this character was a logical sequence in the progress of Mr. Harris's writings. Much of his writing for the *Constitution* had been in kind anticipated by what he had done first for the little old *Countryman*, for the *Advertiser*, and for the *News*. In Forsyth, before he committed

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<sup>1</sup>*Constitution*, September 17, 1879, "Round about in Georgia" column. See a repetition of this self-criticism in the issue of September 23.

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, January 20, 1880.

himself to journalism, he had dreamed of a literary career in which he would "cultivate the tale, the essay, the review, and the novel." That dream had faded during the succeeding years of intense newspaper work, and to have reminded him of it now would have been to overwhelm him in confusion and shame; but through his daily work for the *Constitution* it was, in fact, approaching realization. In Forsyth he wrote his first tale, writing of the fox hunts from the joy and excitement of which he had freshly come.<sup>1</sup> In Atlanta he was entertaining his Sunday readers with fox hunt<sup>2</sup> and other stories based mostly upon his own experience and observation.<sup>3</sup> In addition to his humor (recalling his very first prose contribution to *The Countryman*, "Grumblers"),<sup>4</sup> it was his "thorough knowledge of Southern character," agreed the readers, that made his work so popular. Awaiting "The Romance of Rockville," Colonel Thompson wrote from Savannah: "We have a right to expect in a story from his pen, laid amid scenes with which he is familiar, and illustrative of Georgia life and character, a rare literary treat."<sup>5</sup> Through his "review" column Mr. Harris was proclaiming that great fundamental principle of literary work which he had been taught during the first year of his quasi-college course under Mr. Turner.<sup>6</sup> On two successive Sundays during the fall of 1879 he had written of "Major Jones," associating him with "Hosea Bigelow," and declaring these to be "characters that will

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<sup>1</sup>See page 270.

<sup>2</sup>*Sunday Constitution*, December 16, 1877, "A Georgia Fox Hunt." This story, with some changes, was republished in "On the Plantation."

<sup>3</sup>See reproductions in Part II.

<sup>4</sup>Reproduced on page 38.

<sup>5</sup>W. T. Thompson, *Savannah Morning News*, March, 1878.

<sup>6</sup>See page 147.

live because they are locally perfect and typically national."<sup>1</sup> He had thus caught a wider vision than his war-embittered teacher of '62; and just as he began the folklore series, like another Emerson, he wrote for literary workers of the South and of the nation the following splendid and irreproachable declarations of independence:

#### LITERATURE IN THE SOUTH<sup>2</sup>

The very spice and flavor of all literature, the very marrow and essence of all literary art is its localism. No literary artist can lack for materials in this section. They are here all around him, untouched, undeveloped, undisturbed, unique and original, as new as the world, as old as life, as fair as flowers, as beautiful as the dreams of genius. But they must be mined. They must be run through the stamp mill. Where is the magician who will catch them and store them up? You may be sure that the man who does it will not care one copper whether he is developing and building up Southern or Northern literature, and he will feel that his work is considerably belittled if it be claimed by either on the score of sectionalism. In literature, art, and society, whatever is truly Southern is likewise truly American; and the same may be said of what is Northern. Literature that is Georgian or Southern is necessarily American, and in the broadest sense. The sectionalism that is the most marked feature of our modern politics can never intrude into literature. Its intrusion is fatal, and it is this fatality that has pursued and overtaken and destroyed literary effort in the South. The truth might as well be told. We have no Southern literature worthy of the name, because an attempt has been made to give it the peculiarities of sectionalism rather than to impart to it the flavor of localism.

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<sup>1</sup>*Constitution*, September 28, October 5, 1879. See reproductions, Part II., "Georgia Crackers" and "Puritan and Cracker."

<sup>2</sup>*Constitution*, November 30, 1879 (editorial). Compare *Constitution*, March 4, 1880, review of "The Georgians" (by Mrs. Hammond, of Atlanta).

*PROVINCIALISM IN LITERATURE—A DEFENSE OF  
BOSTON<sup>1</sup>*

We suggest that serious inquiry be made why it is necessary for the son of the New York soap boiler or glue maker or tobacco cutter (as the case may be) to have a coat of arms upon his carriage or a crest upon his stationery; and why, if it is absolutely necessary to have these things, a platter of chitterlings in relief or a bull's hoof or a navy plug, each or all worked in with the American bird of freedom, would not be as appropriate and as respectable as a crest stolen from a foreigner. Why should there not be American crests? Why should there not be an American culture as distinctive in its way as the culture that is English? Why should Americans strive to be anything else than Americans? Why not insist that the provinciality of American literature is the essential quality of all literature, the one quality that gives distinctiveness to literary effort?

It seems almost like sacrilege to hear Mr. James making excuses for Hawthorne ["Essay on Hawthorne," by Henry James, Jr.; two previous essays] to English readers by enumerating the surroundings that the American lacked. He had no sovereign, no court, no personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no Church, no clergy, no diplomatic service, no palaces, no castles, no manors, no cathedrals, no abbeys. All these things and many more are catalogued by Mr. James to show the difficulties under which Hawthorne labored, this man who had before him all the ruins of human passion and who was surrounded by the antiquity of the soul. How paltry, how shriveled and shrunken does the swallow-tail culture of the literary snob appear in contrast with the provinciality which invests the works of Hawthorne with the swift passion of New England's summers, the wild, desolate beauty of her autumns, and the strange, penetrating gloom of her winters!

With no pretensions whatever, but with the spontaneity of genius, Mr. Harris was, as we have seen, in his own writing illustrating this principle of localism. The pathos

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<sup>1</sup>Editorial, *Sunday Constitution*, January 25, 1880.

attending the close of Mr. Turner's life at the untimely age of forty-two is heightened when we think of how he might have lived to less than sixty and have seen the fulfillment of his prophecy that Joe Harris would be one of those to do the writing that he would not be spared to do, and in part through Joe's writing the fulfillment of his desire for a distinctively Southern literature, even the fulfillment of his more specific desire, "And prominent in our books I wish the negro placed."<sup>1</sup> For now Mr. Harris came to place alongside the Georgia cracker, "Major Jones," the Georgia negro, "Uncle Remus." There was an intimation of a forthcoming volume from Mr. Harris in the Darien (Georgia) *Timber Gazette*, which, early in the summer of 1879, suggested that he was "revising the songs and sayings of Uncle Remus for publication."<sup>2</sup> In December there came from him an expression of his desire to collect and preserve in permanent form the plantation legends, when his "Round about in Georgia" column carried this request:

We would be glad if any of our readers who may chance to remember any of the negro fables and legends so popular on the plantations would send us brief outlines of the same. No matter how trivial and nonsensical the story may seem when an attempt is made to give the outline, we shall be glad to have it all the same. Many of our readers have doubtless had such stories recalled by reading the folklore of Uncle Remus, and they will confer a great favor if they will send to us brief outlines of the main incidents and characters. . . . The purpose is to preserve these quaint myths in permanent form. Address J. C. Harris, care of *Constitution*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See page 147.

<sup>2</sup>Darien (Georgia) *Timber Gazette*, as quoted in the *Constitution*, June 8, 1879.

<sup>3</sup>"Round about in Georgia," December 18, 1879, and January 20, 1880.

It is interesting to note that Colonel Thompson was among the very first to respond to this request—immediately.<sup>1</sup> In its prospectus for 1880 the *Constitution* announced a series of the legends. On January 20 the editorial column carried a paragraph that shows how Mr. Harris was engaged in working up the outlines into the finished forms which were given in the paper:

Those interested in the trifles that appear in the *Constitution* under the title of "Uncle Remus's Folklore" were doubtless surprised as well as mystified to find that in the legend printed Sunday there was no sort of connection between the heading and the text. . . . The heading was intended for a story to follow, in regular serial order, the one over which it was placed. . . . Not a line nor a word of that story is yet written. Brer Rabbit himself, with all his shifts and expedients, would fail to give a satisfactory explanation. . . . The proper heading of the legend is "Brer Wolf Appears upon the Scene."

Not later than March, Mr. J. C. Derby, an alert member of the firm of D. Appleton & Co., saw the desirability of publishing Mr. Harris's work in book form, corresponded with him, and went to Atlanta to assist in selecting the material from the files of the *Constitution*.<sup>2</sup> And in November, 1880, just twelve months after the "Tar Baby" story (No. II.) had appeared in the Atlanta paper, the sketches, songs, and proverbs,<sup>3</sup> and thirty-four of the legends were issued from the press in the first edition of "Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Round about in Georgia" column, December 20, 1879.

<sup>2</sup>"Fifty Years among Authors, Books, and Publishers," J. C. Derby. New York, 1884. Pages 433-440. (Errors in dates; see *Constitution*, April 2, 1880.)

<sup>3</sup>"Negro proverbs had been first published in the *Constitution* December 18, 1879.

<sup>4</sup>"See editorial announcements of the book, *Constitution*, April 9 and November 19, 1880. Also see editorial November 28, 1880.

During the twenty-eight remaining years of his life, twenty of which were still devoted to his regular work as an editor of the *Constitution*, Mr. Harris redeemed the promises of his earlier years and published many other works of considerable merit.<sup>1</sup> It is not the purpose of this volume to discuss those works. "Uncle Remus" was his supreme accomplishment. Had he done nothing else, his name would have been no less prominent. He had done a work essential to American literature, because it reflected an integral part of life in America. He enshrined in literature the antebellum negro, giving a precious record of his dialect and folklore and projecting him upon such a background as to give us a glimpse of the dear departed days of plantation life in the South. He did it with such fidelity as to receive from his contemporaries universal approval. He did it with such art as to put it beyond restrictions of tongue or time. He did it at the one moment when it could be done. The old negro character, which the world so soon took to its heart, is replete, notwithstanding its humor, with the deep pathos that attends the passing of a well-loved type. Therefore, not unlike "Hiawatha" and "The Last of the Mohicans," "Uncle Remus" has a place distinctively his own in our literature as long as that literature shall live.

But surely no other author ever took his place among the great so unconsciously. Surely no other was ever so embarrassed by sudden fame. Surely no other ever clung so immovably to simplicity and humbleness. The profits from his book quickly enabled him to buy a home in West End, Atlanta; and, except as his regular duties demanded, rarely was he to be found elsewhere. Always protesting that he was not a literary man, endeavoring, with the aid of his wife, to escape from all "literary interviews," and shrinking

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<sup>1</sup>See "Bibliography."

from strangers, social functions, and any kind of personal prominence, but, writing with spontaneous interest and pleasure, holding his friends in warm affection, tenderly considerate of every creature, loving little children, and befriending the needy, he went modestly about his daily duties and sought to live in quiet happiness with his family at "The Sign of the Wren's Nest." Here he died on July 3, 1908. His grave, in Westview Cemetery, is fittingly marked by an unhewn granite boulder. On a bronze tablet appear his own words:

*I seem to see before me the smiling faces of thousands of children—some young and fresh, and some wearing the friendly marks of age, but all children at heart—and not an unfriendly face among them. And out of the confusion, and while I am trying hard to speak the right word, I seem to hear a voice lifted above the rest, saying: "You have made some of us happy." And so I feel my heart fluttering and my lips trembling, and I have to bow silently and turn away and hurry back into the obscurity that fits me best.*





THE "WREN'S NEST," THE HOME ON SNAP BEAN FARM



**PART II**  
*EARLY LITERARY EFFORTS*



## I

### HARRIS'S EARLIEST VERSE AND PROSE COMPOSITIONS, FROM THE AGE OF FOURTEEN, AS PUBLISHED IN THE COUNTRY- MAN (1862-1866)

FROM an exhaustive search through the files of *The Countryman* (seven issues lacking), there is listed below every contribution of Mr. Harris to that wonderful little paper with which his career began.<sup>1</sup> Reproductions not appearing in Part I. are given here. It will be observed how consistently the various forms of signature are used, apparently showing a preference for the efforts in verse:

Vol. III., No. 10, December 1, 1862, the first signed contribution:

INK

*Mr. Countryman:* In looking over a file of an old paper I find the following recipe for making black ink, which may prove valuable to you as well as your readers, owing to the scarcity of the fluid. Will you give it a trial and report the result?

J. C. HARRIS.

[The recipe follows.]

Vol. III., No. 12, December 15, 1862: "Grumblers," J. C. Harris. The second signed contribution. Reproduced in Part I.

Vol. IV., No. 8, February 17, 1863: "Sabbath Evening in the Country," J. C. Harris. Reproduced in Part I.

Vol. IV., No. 10: "Death" (two-thirds column; reflective).

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<sup>1</sup>See full description of *The Countryman* and Harris's connection with it in Part I.

Vol. IV., No. 11: "A Dream" (Carnival-Lent; prices before the war and present prices).

Vol. IV., No. 14: "The Progress of Civilization" (one column and a half).

Vol. V., No. 2, April 14, 1863:

Why do the Yankees delay their attack upon the chief Rebel port?

Because they find a *Charleston* too heavy for their gunboats to carry.

COUNTRYMAN'S DEVIL.

Vol. V., No. 3: More than a column of "Whys" from the "Countryman's Devil."

Vol. V., No. 4: A number of "Whys" not signed.

Vol. V., No. 5:

Says the *Constitutionalist*: "Our brother of *The Countryman* has been publishing a number of sharp sayings of late which he uniformly ascribes to 'our devil.'" Whereupon the *Confederate Union* propounds as follows:

"Why is the editor of *The Countryman* like the enemy's fleet when they attacked Charleston?"

"Because he puts his 'devil' foremost."

*The Countryman* editor replied: "The *Confederate Union* is disposed to undervalue the services of *The Countryman's* devil. If it only knew what a smart devil *The Countryman* has, it would not do so. Just ask your 'Jim' about it, Brother Nisbit. He knows 'our devil.'"

Vol. V., No. 8: "Disputants" (ten lines against wrangling over trivialities, like dogs over a bone).

Vol. V., No. 9: Further word plays, as above.

Vol. V., No. 11: Further word plays.

Vol. V., No. 13: "Lost!" J. C. Harris. Reproduced in Part I.

Vol. VI., No. 9, September 1, 1863: "Hypocrites" (one-third column; reflective).

Vol. VI., No. 10: "We have received from 'J. C. H.' a critique to show that 'Hindoo' is not a rhyme to 'window'" (one-half column discussion by the editor).

Vol. VI., No. 11: "Prodigality" (ten lines declaring the prodigal worse than the miser, because the miser hurts only himself).

*SENSUAL PLEASURES*

Sensual pleasures twine around our virtues, as the boa-constrictor does the antelope, and leave them lubricated in their slime, only awaiting a favorable opportunity to swallow them whole. Of such pleasures it may be said that they sustain us in our youth only to destroy us in our old age. They should be avoided with a wholesome dread only equaled by the fear of an endless torment. T. C. HARRIS.

Vol. XI., No. 1, November 3, 1863:

*PARTYISM*

Three years ago partyism ran high in Georgia. The last Presidential campaign in the old United States was one of the most hotly contested elections ever held in this State; and our people, seeing the effect of such political struggles, resolved, when Georgia seceded, to remember no old party differences, to draw no new lines of party faction. Some of the most influential men and presses in the State advocated this course. For one year things went on very smoothly in their new channel; but at the end of that time any one, to notice closely, could see a faint indication of the revival of old party lines and differences. This indication increased day by day, until it became almost general; and in 1863, at the last gubernatorial campaign, it burst out in a perfect tornado of fanatical partyism. New differences were brought forth and old ones renewed. Political fury was at its height. Even those who were the first to propose to lay aside all bickering and strife were the first to break their own rules; and even as they broke them they warned others of the results of party differences. Such was their fanatical furor about the gubernatorial candidates!

"I'll have Hill," says one editor. "No, you won't!" answers another. "But I'll be — if I don't!" rejoins the first. And thus they go. The above may apply to the supporters of Brown also.

To be an editor requires sense and a knowledge of right; but if it isn't wanting in the craniums of some of the editorial fraternity, then we don't know what it requires to be an editor.

J. C. HARRIS.

Vol. XIX., No. 10, March 8, 1864: Two moralizings (eight lines each).

Vol. XIX., No. 39: "Nelly White." (Written for *The Countryman*.) By Joel C. Harris. (Poem; see page 159.)

Vol. XXI., No. 5: "The Battle Bird," by Joel C. Harris, Turnwold, Georgia, 1864. (Poem; see page 159.)

Vol. XXI., No. 7: "Nature," by Joel C. Harris, Turnwold, Georgia, 1864. (Sonnet; see Part I.)

Vol. XX., No. 3, January 17, 1865: "Ruaene! Ruaene!" by Joel C. Harris. (Five stanzas and four-line refrain.)

Vol. XX., No. 4: "Macaria," J. C. H. (Reproduced in Part I.)

Vol. XX., No. 13: "Accursed," by Joel C. Harris. (Poem; see page 161.)

Vol. XX., No. 14: "Moonlight," by Joel C. Harris, Turnwold, Georgia. (Poem; see page 162.)

Vol. XX., No. 16: "Murder," by Joel C. Harris. (Poem; see page 163.)

Vol. XX., No. 20: "Obituary," by J. C. H. (On the death of a child at Turnwold; see page 164.)

Vol. XXI., No. 4: "Christmas," by J. C. H., December 25, 1865. (One and one-third column; see Part I.) "The Old Year and the New," by J. C. H., midnight, December 31, 1865. (See page 164.)

Vol. XXI., No. 2, February 6, 1866: "A Vision," by Joel C. Harris, Turnwold, Georgia. (Poem; see page 165.)

Vol. XXI., No. 3: "Poe and Griswold," J. C. H. (One column and a fifth; unfavorable comments on Griswold's biography of Poe; see page 167.)

Vol. XXI., No. 4: "Moselle," by Joel C. Harris. (Poem; reproduced in Part I.)

Vol. XXI., No. 6: "Our Minnie Grey," by Joel C. Harris, Turnwold, Georgia. (Poem; reproduced in Part I.)

"There are two things continually before our eyes which we never see: our own faults and our neighbors' virtues."  
—J. C. H.

Vol. XXI., No. 7: "Mary," by Joel C. Harris, Turnwold, Georgia. (Poem; see Part I.)



NELLY WHITE<sup>1</sup>(Written for *The Countryman*)

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

The autumn moon rose calm and clear,  
And nearly banished night,  
While I with trembling footsteps went  
To part with Nelly White.

I thought to leave her but a while,  
And, in the golden West,  
To seek the fortune that should make  
My darling Nelly blest.

For I was of the humble poor,  
Who knew that love, though bold,  
And strong and firm within itself,  
Was stronger—bound in gold!

And when I knelt at Mammon's shrine,  
An angel ever spake  
Approvingly—since what I did,  
I did for *Nelly's* sake!

Again I neared the sacred spot  
Where she and I last met—  
With merry laugh does Nelly come  
To meet her lover yet?

Again the moon rose in the sky  
And gave a pitiful light,  
Which shone with dreary gleam upon  
*The grave of Nelly White!*

## THE BATTLE BIRD

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

It is related that at the battle of Resaca a mocking bird perched itself within the Confederate lines and maintained

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<sup>1</sup>Not unlikely his first poem, three efforts in the composition of the verses appearing in his exercise book of those days.

its position throughout the whole of the fight, giving utterance at times to wild and varied melody common to birds of its species. The fearlessness of the bird, combined with the singularity of the incident, renders it a fit subject for a poem. Hence these humble lines.

Resaca! on thy bloody battle plain

How many a scene of rueful, sad disaster,  
When groan to groan was echoed back again,  
And Death was there as master!

How many a youth in battle proudly fell,

Who, lying in his blood as dying victor,  
Gave back in agony the vengeful yell  
As brave as Roman lictor!

How many a soldier in his death sleep dreamed.

That once again he trod "the realms of fairy,"  
While down his careworn, sunburnt cheek there streamed  
A tear—perchance for "Mary"!

And many an infant, tranquilly at play,

Ne'er dreamed that Woe and Grief and Death were flying,  
But played the while, nor thought that "father" lay  
Among the dead and dying!

But 'mid the roar and clash and din of fight,

While rifle shot and bugle call were mingling,  
Perched on a lonely tree top, full in sight,  
The Battle Bird was singing!

The fight raged on; but still the soothing song

Rang peacefully, with cadence soft and mellow,  
Above the groan and curse of weak and strong  
And brazen cannon's bellow!

Withal it was a gentle lay and sad;

Its peaceful swell the horrid day was mocking.  
O! what was there to make the bird so glad?  
Its happiness was shocking!

But ah! it prophesies a time to come

Which has been wept for by our fathers hoary,  
When Peace with weary feet shall cease to roam  
And take her seat in glory

Within our nation's gashed and bleeding breast—  
 The dawning of a glorious, glad to-morrow—  
 And speak, in angel tones, a queen's behest :  
*"Release the Land from Sorrow!"*

TURNWOLD, GEORGIA, 1864.

### ACCURSED

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

A man and a woman met in the wood,  
 Where the virgin blooms of spring begin :  
 The woman was weak, but pure and good ;  
 In the heart of the man was *sin*.  
 They met at the trysting place to woo,  
 And the moon hid her face behind a cloud ;  
 The wind held its breath and never blew,  
 And the moon waned away in her shroud.  
 And they parted there at the trysting tree,  
 And the moon shone out with her blessed light,  
 And the gray owl shrieked with fiendish glee  
 At the sight she saw that night.  
 . . . . .  
 A woman in tears paced up and down—  
 Paced up and down her narrow room ;  
 Her face was dark with a wicked frown,  
 Making wretched and darker the gloom.  
 Her flowing hair, with its ebon dyes,  
 Had broken the bands of its golden clasp ;  
 The tears fell fast from her great black eyes,  
 And she breathed with a heaving gasp.  
 She looked like the Lady does in the Play  
 When she tells her husband to murder the King ;  
 And she sobbed and wept in the twilight gray  
 And scowled at her lover's ring.  
 . . . . .  
 A man paced up and down in his room  
 And clasped his hands to his aching head ;  
 He shrunk from a shade in the dusky gloom,  
 For the woman he wronged is dead !

She died as all women die on earth  
 Whom men have wronged with deceitful lies,  
 And she left a babe on her father's hearth—  
 She died as a floweret dies.

Whene'er men wrong a sinless soul,  
 You know, they forever curse their own;  
 For fate on fate must ever roll—  
 Men reap what they have sown!

A man paced up and down a stream,  
 A man 'neath the weight of a curse bowed down;  
 His eye shone bright with a maniac gleam,  
 And despair was in his frown.

A shivering glance at the rushing river,  
 A longing look at the bright, green world,  
 A leap, and the man was hid forever  
 Where the eddies foamed and curled.

TURNWOLD, GEORGIA.

### MOONLIGHT

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

It falleth in the valley;  
 It resteth on the hill;  
 It lies with placid sadness  
 Where sleep the dead so still.

It floats with mystic grandeur  
 Around the village church;  
 It shrouds with silver splendor  
 The tall and ancient birch.

It floods with pensive radiance  
 The climbing cypress vine,  
 And peeps in at the lattice  
 Where sleeps a love of mine.

Among the moldering gravestones  
 It trails a dreamy haze,  
 Hiding the souls immortal  
 From sinful human gaze.

It flingeth ghostly shadows  
Beneath the grave old oaks,  
Where hides the owl in daylight,  
And where the raven croaks.

But blessèd be the moonlight,  
And may it nightly shine  
Upon the creeping cypress  
And on that love of mine!

TURNWOLD, GEORGIA.

### MURDER

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

Up through the woods, from out the glen,  
Came a quick and a stifled shriek  
Which broke but faintly on the ear,  
It was so short and weak,  
As if some hand had frightened back  
The words it tried to speak.

An ominous bird on the leafless oak  
Suddenly hushed its dismal croak  
And whetted its horny beak.

From out the woods, from out the vale  
Came the sound upon the night,  
Striving to call some living thing  
To see the awful sight  
Of a human body lying in blood,  
With its face so ghastly white.  
The screech owl saw the deathly scene,  
Saw the stain of blood on the grass so green,  
And shivered with affright.

'Twas but a step down in the glen,  
From the old birch tree but a rod.  
The murderer had a knife in his hand;  
And at his feet, on the sod,  
Lay the body of the murdered man,  
Now but a lifeless clod;  
For the horrid deed had been done well,  
While the soul of the man took its flight and fell  
At the very feet of God.

Now on the murderer's sinful eyes  
 Be forever placed a ban!  
 No more shall they be closed in sleep;  
 But nightly shall they scan  
 The face and form of the shrieking one  
 Whose life he made a span,  
 And the ghastly wounds that his hate had made,  
 The print of his hand, the work of his blade  
 In the breast of the murdered man!  
 TURNWOLD, GEORGIA.

### OBITUARY<sup>1</sup>

Died in Putnam County, Georgia, April 27, 1865, Joseph Addison Turner, infant son of Burges and Emily Eskew, aged one year and two months. Christ has said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Therefore, when little children go to their Heavenly Father we should not mourn. Rather let us weep for the living, who are left here in this cold, cruel world without the cheering smiles of those who have drawn their mantles around them and lain down "to pleasant dreams." And although little Joe's body lies in the ground, his soul rests in the bosom of his God.

Between him and the ills of life  
 He saw an angel stand;  
 He, smiling, reached his little arms  
 And grasped the angel's hand.

J. C. H.

### THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW<sup>2</sup>

I love and reverence the past, notwithstanding there is something of sadness and, withal, of grief in the cup it has pressed to my lips. In reverencing the past I am suspicious of the future. And who is not? As our friend the gentle

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<sup>1</sup>Compare "Juliette" and "In Memoriam," Part I., pages 109, 110.

<sup>2</sup>This theme was worked over again and again in editorials and verse. See Part I., pages 72 and 107, and *Atlanta Constitution*, December 30, 1877 (editorial).

Elia has remarked: "The future, being everything, is nothing; the past, being nothing, is everything." What have we to do with the future? It belongs to God. The past belongs to us; though, it is true, we have rendered it into the hands of the Almighty for safekeeping, nevertheless it is ours. With these thoughts I grasp the old year by the hand and cry in the words of the sweet Tennyson:

"He frothed his bumpers to the brim—

A jollier year we shall not see;  
But though his eyes are waxing dim,  
And though his foes speak ill of him,  
He was a friend to me.

Old Year, you shall not die!

We did so laugh and cry with you,  
I've half a mind to die with you,  
Old Year, if you must die!"

Yes, we've all "half a mind to die with you, Old Year, if you must die," for we know you have got our dear friends with you. Treat them gently, Old Year, for our sakes. Keep them close to your bosom, away from the driving snow and ice which the New Year will beat in *our* faces. You have a spectral band along with you, Old Year; for cherries will wither, and roses will fade, but you knew them in their brightest days. So handle their ashes carefully.

The heart of Time is beating the knell of the Old Year. Twelve chimes, and he will be no more. Shake him by the hand. Send your love to the ashes of your friends—*Gone!*

But the soul of the Old Year has transmigrated into the New, and, by a metempsychosis of *Memory*, our dear departed friends will still walk with us.

J. C. H.

Midnight, December 31, 1865.

### A VISION

BY JOEL C. HARRIS

Methinks I see, cloud-capped, the tower of Fame,  
Her glory banner flouting the dim air,  
Inscribed upon its folds her empty name,  
For that alone hath its existence there.

And there I see pale-faced Ambition stand  
With gleaming eye upon that mountain height,  
Holding a quivering heart in either hand,  
And gloating on them with a fierce delight.

Gnashing with rage his foaming, famished teeth,  
Close by, I hear the bloodhound Hunger's bay,  
While the deep bosom of the vale beneath  
Kennels his howlings as they die away.

Not far away Disaster writhes and groans  
While fiercely clutching at the throats of men;  
She seizes one, and now his dismal moans  
Rise for a moment, then subside again.

Here Avarice presses to his palsied breast  
The orphan's gold, the widow's souvenir,  
And mutters in his sleep with dark unrest,  
As if the fiends were in his heart astir.

I see the lofty, gaudy plumes of Pride  
Waving above a bosom white as snow—  
Surf-beaten rock, where Feeling wrecked and died,  
Leaving but hollowness of heart below.

I see the pearls of Riches flashing by;  
Her rustling silks and trailing robes I hear—  
Her rustling silks the echoes of a sigh,  
Her glistening pearls fit emblems of a tear.

Fair Beauty blooms like the first flower of morn,  
And from her eye shines forth a gentle trust;  
But Slander points at her the hand of Scorn,  
And Beauty droops and fades away to dust.

Here Sorrow sits and hums a solemn tune,  
Gazing on all things with a vacant stare,  
Moaning beneath the pale-faced, weeping moon,  
With her black mantle floating in the air.

Here gaunt Despair, the child of Sorrow, sits  
And makes loud wailings in the ear of night;  
And here Revenge with ceaseless movement flits,  
But never takes a grand nor lofty flight.



Here base Ingratitude flies through the air  
And holds on high her fiery, treacherous dart,  
Ready to strike some, however fair,  
And on its point impale some human heart.

Remorse is walking in the fading light ;  
Her scowling cries are echoing far and wide ;  
She clasps some mortal to her breast to-night  
Whose frightened screams roll down the mountain side.

I see red War binding upon his brow  
The reeking laurel and the gory bay ;  
The widow and the orphan meekly bow  
Before his frown and wildly weep and pray.

Behind red War grim Desolation stands  
Amid the ruins of a thousand years,  
And, waving in the air his magic hands,  
The crumbling home of man quick disappears.

Thus each and all their horrid orgies hold  
And shriek and curse and vent their vengeful spleen,  
Till one more pure, the boldest of the bold,  
Stalks in among them with a fearless mien.

Above them all brave Virtue boldly rears  
Her throne and gazes on the frightful scene ;  
And now each demon swiftly disappears  
Before the glances of her eye serene.

TURNWOLD, GEORGIA.

### *POE AND GRISWOLD*

One of the most miserably gotten-up affairs, perhaps, that ever intruded itself upon the reading public of America was Griswold's biography of Edgar Allan Poe, affixed to the works of that lamented genius. Leaving altogether out of view the heartless malignity and maliciousness which it contains, there is enough of nonsensical mediocrity, patronizing inferiority, and ridiculous envy to damn it forever in the mind of any reader of taste. Griswold does not enter at all into the humor of Poe, nor does he appreciate the

idiosyncrasies of that author's diction. For instance, when Poe defies the literary clique of Boston and then, as if to appease and ridicule them at the same time, tells them *he* was born in their town, Griswold, with a grave sagacity truly laughable, sagely informs us that Poe could *not* have been in his right mind when he stated Boston was the place of his nativity; for, persists Griswold, he was born in Baltimore! And, to crown the absurdity of the whole affair, the consistent Puritan divine, after holding before the eye of the public and greatly aggravating every little misdemeanor of Poe—after doing all this, the Rev. Rufus W. Griswold cries in the overflowing benevolence of his heart: "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum!*" It is plain that Griswold was—just what one might expect from the company he kept.

It is to be regretted that we are indebted alone to a creature of romance for the description of Poe's temper and habits as given by Griswold. In his life of Poe he says, "He was in many respects like Francis Vivian in Bulwer's novel of 'The Caxtons,'" and gives us the description of Bulwer's creation of romance without using quotation marks or in any manner only the most doubtful letting us know that he is copying from Bulwer word for word.

Again, to show his critical ability and to parade before the reader his analytical astuteness, he says, speaking of the author of "The Raven": "He was not remarkably original in invention." This is of a piece with Griswold's whole production and similar to his criticisms upon several of the prose writers of America, where he mentions an author altogether mediocre, "whose style," he says, "if not possessing the simplicity and smoothness of Goldsmith, at least is more vigorous and terse than that of Addison."

Upon the whole, it is to be regretted that the writing of Poe's biography fell into the hands of Griswold; and I hope even yet that we may have an edition of the works of that great genius honorable alike to his memory and to us as an honest people.

J. C. H.

## II

### HARRIS'S FIRST SHORT STORIES, LITERARY CRITICISMS, ETC., AS PUBLISHED IN THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

FROM a careful search through the files of the *Atlanta Constitution* from 1876 to 1881, there are listed below all of Mr. Harris's signed contributions to the paper during that period, including some distinctive editorials, literary reviews, etc., not signed, but generally known to be his. Practically all these were published in the Sunday issues, and it is safe to say that he did no other writing at this time. In the reproductions that follow it is especially interesting to trace the development of Mr. Harris's talent for narrative writing. It will be seen how he proceeded from fact to fiction. Characters, incidents, and setting, with more or less camouflage, were taken from life, generally as they had fallen under his observation in and near his boyhood home in Putnam County, Georgia. No attempt has been made to designate here any of his "heavy" editorials; and the "Uncle Remus" matter, having been fully discussed in Part I., is not included.

1876

October 26: The "Round about in Georgia" column of brief paragraphic news and comment began. Harris's first negro sketch, "Jeems Robinson," appeared.

December 5: "A Remembrance," J. C. Harris. (First signed contribution; see Part I., page 99.)

1877

January 14: "Juliette," J. C. Harris. (See Part I., page 109.)

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February 14: "An Electoral Ballad," J. C. Harris. (Six stanzas.)

February 15: "A Legislative Idyl," J. C. Harris. (Eight stanzas.)

March 4: "An Atlanta Poet." (Review.)

March 18: "Love in Idleness." (Review.) "A Country Newspaper." (Editorial narrative.)

April 1: "Seward's Georgia Sweetheart." (Editorial narrative.)

April 15: "Sassafras in Season." (Editorial.)

April 22: "The May Magazines." (Review.)

May 6: "A Summer Mood." (Editorial.) "A Guzzled Guest," J. C. H. (Narrative.)

May 13: "On Wings of Wind," J. C. H. (Narrative.)

May 20: "Tale of Two Tramps," J. C. H. (Narrative.)

May 27: "Proemial to Putnam," J. C. H. (Narrative.) "Cornfield Peas." (Editorial.)

June 3: "One Man's History," J. C. H. (Narrative.)

June 10: "A Romantic Rascal," J. C. H. (Narrative.)

October 14: "Uncle Remus as a Rebel," J. C. H. (Narrative.)

October 28: "An Autumn Mood." (Editorial.)

November 25: "A Country Church." (Editorial.)

December 9: "The Old Plantation." (Editorial.)

December 16: "A Georgia Fox Hunt," J. C. H. (Narrative.)

### 1878

January 1: "The Old Year and the New," J. C. Harris. (See page 164.)

April 16-September 10: "The Romance of Rockville," by Joel Chandler Harris." (Serial story in the *Weekly Constitution*.)

August 3: Political correspondence from Gainesville, Georgia, signed J. C. H. and H.

September 14-17: Political correspondence from Barnesville, Georgia, J. C. H.

### 1879

March 22: "The Art of Murder." (Editorial.)

September 28: "Georgia Crackers: Types and Shadows." (Editorial.)

October 5: "The Puritan and the Cracker." (Editorial.)

November 23: "My Sorrow's Sign (Vilanelle)," J. C. Harris. (Six stanzas.)

November 30: "A Ballad of Youth," J. C. Harris. (Twenty-eight lines.) "Literature in the South." (Editorial; see Part I., page 147.)

December 7: "A Word to the Wise," J. C. Harris. (Nine stanzas.)

December 25: "Christmas Time." (Editorial.)

### 1880

January 25: "Provincialism in Literature: A Defense of Boston." (Editorial; see Part I., page 148.)

March 4: "A Pair of Books." (Editorial.)

March 28: "Hopkins's Heifers." (Narrative.)

June 20-24: Political correspondence from Cincinnati, Uncle Remus and J. C. H.

### 1881

January 26: Magazine reviews.

February 20: "As to Southern Literature." (Editorial.)

June 29: "The Georgians." (Editorial review.)

### CHARACTERISTIC SUNDAY EDITORIALS

#### *SASSAFRAS IN SEASON*

After all, think it over as you may, the seasons of the year are mere sentiments; and sentiment, the sterner logicians say, is a mere delusion. And yet spring, whether it be a season or a sentiment, is no delusion. When a practical jay bird erects his efficient topknot and gives it out to his neighbors in tones loud and shrill enough to be emphatic and portentous that spring has come to stay, fidicious housewives, regarding with some solicitude the health of their various families, will begin to watch for the vendors of the sassafras. This has come to be so much the custom with those who dwell in these higher latitudes of health and repose that, in the absence of either jay bird or sassafras root, summer would be upon us ere we knew that spring had fairly begun. Sassafras is one of the accessories of

the season—nay, it is one of the necessities. Only the pungent and fragrant odor of the root could make the delusion complete. Let the winds that March hath left behind howl as they may. Let the rains of December beat upon the bare head of April. It is all one until sassafras tea is ordered by the head of the household as a part of the daily regimen. According to a superstition well grounded—and, we may say, well founded—the strict and continuous use of sassafras tea is calculated to cool the blood and prevent that accumulation of boils which seems to be among the results of the quickening season which with impartial dispensation produces alike the modest violet and the gaudy carbuncle. As for us, give us sassafras tea. There is nothing in the season more fragrant or more stimulating. It is well enough for those who have leisure forever standing at their elbows and smiling an invitation to wander in the pomp and pride of lonely circumstance among the majestic woods, inhaling the piquant flavor of the honeysuckle, enjoying the resinous balm that the tall pines dispense with every sigh, and envying the suppleness of the ground squirrel—a suppleness, gentle reader, that seems to know no superannuation—it is well enough, we say, for those who are addicted to these things to prate about the beauties of nature; but when all these can be found concentrated in one single cup of the beverage known as sassafras tea and can be enjoyed in a dozen ravenous gulps, how unnecessary it is for one to trust himself among the spiders and the red bugs, which, unmindful of the year, the season, or the day, stand ever ready, when the sun is out, to fall upon man with teeth and toenail!

Thus it happens that the odor of sassafras is one of the truest harbingers of spring. Sentiment—ah! thou knowest it well, romantic young vagabond!—whether of time, place, or season, is closely allied to the sense of smell, else wherefore doth even a mention of the shrub known as life everlasting bring back to thee vague memories of the serene and stately old lady who, mysteriously enough to thy remembrance, called herself thy grandmother? Confess it now or go thy way. Did she not, ere thy childishness had outgrown its inquisitiveness, send thee forth upon many a despondent tour to gather life everlasting, the which she carefully scat-

tered through the capacious trunks, the contents of which for years and years afterwards were a subject of considerably more interest than the contents of the cavern into which the lamp-cleaning propensities of Aladdin precipitated him? Deny it not. It is known of all men and is fresh in the experience of those who, somewhat foolishly, treasure up these things as precious memories.

As to the sassafras, it would be well to remember that it is not good to brew it into a beverage when, as now, the season is as cold as the tips of a barber's fingers. Wait until the poplar leaves have grown as large as squirrels' ears; wait until the barley gets knee-high to the awkward goslings; wait, in short, until our barometrical jay bird poises himself on one leg and bawls forth to the world that the sap of spring has begun to permeate and quicken the dry bones of autumn.

### *A SUMMER MOOD*

Happily, we can trust easily to appearances in this genial clime, where the bluebird whistles no unseasonable note, where the sparrow knows where to build her little nest of wool and hay and moss and how to lay the little twigs across, and where the red bird, dressed in his scarlet suit, knows precisely when to flit through the green leaves of the trees like an animated fireball. We read of snows in Quebec and on the plains and of perpetual ice at the antipodes; but what are they to us? Are we not provided against inclemency? Spring is most effectual and eloquently symbolized in the prevailing fashions. A fair young girl trips laughingly by in a white dress trimmed with flowers; a precocious youth prances along with a rose in his buttonhole, a tempting bait for the girls to nibble at; and, lo! spring is upon us, a season at once delusive and delightful, impalpable and yet precious. And yet, when spring melts into summer, what compliments shall we frame to the memory of the poor, frayed damsel who amused our youth? How can we forego the delights of one season long enough to remember the beauties of another? Ask us not, when summer takes the year to her amorous bosom, to deplore the fatality which hurries the

sun to the meridian of the season. After all, spring has nothing but promises. What if the bud should fail to blossom? What if the flower should fail to fruit? Ah! but you say the summer days are long and languishing. Only to a few, gentlest of gentle readers—only to a few. Those who are stricken with melancholia or dyspepsia or ennui may, perhaps, wish themselves well over the weather; but the lusty ones who enjoy themselves, who take deep delight in whatsoever bounties that nature (the bountifulest of all mothers) furnishes them, welcome the approach of summer and partake of her moods and all the phases of her moods with an enjoyment beyond expression. Let the sun beat down upon the housetops and the pavements never so fiercely. Let the mercury climb never so high. They have only to betake themselves to the breezy and balm-bearing woods to be rid of the heat and the dust and the desperation that appertain to the city. A Partaga of orthodox brand and a substantially bound copy of Sir Thomas Browne's quaint and curious essays are enough to banish all thoughts of the summer solstice. If you know not Sir Thomas, gentle reader, we pray you to hasten to make his acquaintance. He is more original and more captivating in his quaintness than Shakespeare. The latter, it is true, wrote for all time and for the millions; but Sir Thomas, more particular and more patient, wrote for all time and for the few. Cultivate him ere the summer overtakes you, otherwise you may have occasion to deplore the languor of the summer that is just ahead. It will be a season for contemplation; and all contemplation tends toward the time when, to use the words of Sir Thomas, "the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy." Let the season have her sway. Let the days be long and languishing. Whatsoever is to be, let it be; but give not your time to ignoble perspiration and useless repinings. Trust us for this and fall into our summer mood.

#### CORNFIELD PEAS

It may be that we speak too late, but that instinct which has thrilled epicureans since daintiness of taste was acquired prompts us to suggest to the gentle husbandmen of



Georgia that they be unusually lavish this season in sowing peas—not that delicate variety known as the lady pea, but that lustier and hardier species known far and wide as the cornfield pea. We have no advice to offer as to how they shall be planted—in fact, we are utterly ignorant as to the process. Moreover, even if we did know ever so much about it, it would ill become us as fair-minded men to usurp the functions of our agricultural editor, who is no doubt prepared at any moment to write an essay upon the proper mode of scattering these attractive seeds broadcast over the land. We merely insist that they shall be planted, and planted circumspectly.

If we have any weakness at all—which heaven forbid!—it is a love for cornfield peas. Worldly-wise proprietors of caravansaries may ignore these savory and delicious globules in their bills of fare, and purveyors of dinners may scorn to give them a place in their menus, but nothing that the art of cookery has ever invented can at all approach in delicacy and deliciousness a mess of cornfield peas. We speak advisedly. In addition to this, they are suggestive. One whiff of the steam that arises from the pot (they must be boiled in an old-fashioned washpot and not in one of these newfangled tin boilers) sets memory adrift, and, borne upon the pungent aroma, she goes back to the days of the old plantation, those wonderful days when pleasure waited upon anticipation and when peace held the land under the shadow of her white wings. It was in those days that the cornfield pea won upon our affections, twining, as it were, the gentle tendrils of its luxuriant vine around our appetites.

There are few people nowadays, unhappily, who know how to prepare this savory vegetable for the table. The recipe is simple. First, be certain that you have peas enough. This is quite important, because, when once your guests have sniffed the odor of the dish and caught the flavor upon their palates, they will rise up as one man—or several women, as the case may be—and unanimously call for more. We will take it for granted, however, that you have peas enough. The next thing is to cook. For this you want a brisk fire, an iron pot (these tin boilers are an abomination), a generous slice of bacon streaked with lean and

fat, three or four pods of red pepper, and a judicious person to superintend the whole business. They are sufficiently cooked when one, placed between the thumb and forefinger, will melt away at the bare suggestion of pressure. They are to be seasoned according to taste and served smoking hot with substantial pones of corn bread and fresh buttermilk. Some there are who affect a preference for the white variety of this most delightful vegetable; but, for our part, we will take the speckled pea. We fancy they are more substantial and pungent, but it may all be fancy. We are not going to quarrel over the variety. Give us the cornfield peas, and we will be satisfied. Cook them as they should be cooked, season them as they should be seasoned, and, our word for it, no person of refined taste will refuse to nibble at them. If they should refuse, then, Oh, shade of Epicurus, smite them with thy pewter spoon! Deaden their palates and banish them to some sterile land where cornfield peas neither bud nor blossom nor fruit.

#### *A COUNTRY CHURCH*

Somewhere in this broad land, gentle reader, away from the dust and smoke of the cities, away from the turbulence of trade and traffic, is a little church that is far dearer to your heart than the costly and brilliantly appointed edifice in which you worship your Maker, a little church that serves as a memorial of your past. It is useless to deny it. We know the church. It is deeply embowered in the woods, a sanctuary within a sanctuary. Upon one side a breezy land leads to the door; upon the other side a white, sandy road glistens through the trees. It is not an imposing edifice, this rude little temple. The roof is gray with age, and the rains and storms have left the somber impress of their varying visits upon shingle and sill and lintel. The rough window shutters hang ungracefully upon their storm-twisted and rust-eaten hinges. The benches are hard and uncomfortable. And here and there some youth, more thoughtless than irreverent, has satisfied an instinct, which moves much wiser folk, by a preposterously rude attempt to carve his initials in the yield pine; or, mayhap, prematurely smitten by the subtle flame which sooner or later touches all hearts, he has wrought in bungling fashion a monogram wherein

appear the talisman signs of some coy maiden's name. The pulpit has a cold and cheerless appearance to your metropolitan eye. Its Puritan plainness is unrelieved by moldings or hangings or cushions or tassels. No chandelier swings from the rafters, but in lieu thereof long lines of sunlight stream downward from crevices in the roof. There is no carpet on the floor, and the walls are stained by age. Sitting in your old seat where you sat so many years ago, and realizing the rudeness and the discomfort of everything you see, you fall to wondering at the impulse that brought you hither. It is dull—it is more than dull; it is tiresome. It would have been better—

But the preacher has arisen in his place. He is an old man. He has held you on his knee in that past which you have almost forgotten. You know that he is an earnest man; you know that he is a good man. You know that he serves the little flock around him without money and without price, and you know that his hands are hard from toil. He reads his text with the same laborious care that you know so well, and your trained ear invites you to smile at some of the peculiarities of accent which it is quick to detect. You do not accept the invitation; and when the preacher closes the book with the old gesture of impatience, as though he were anxious to free himself as quickly as possible from the barriers of print, you find yourself curious to hear what he has to say—curious rather than anxious, for since the days when you heard the old man's voice your belief has drifted into devious and disastrous ways. You have followed the scientists through their discoveries and deductions and fallen into the pessimist pitfalls laid for your reason by the philosophers. You have read Tyndall and Darwin and Huxley, to say nothing of the vast herd of commentators who follow in their train.

And yet, almost before the old man has announced his thesis, your fine theories of philosophy and your scholarly reasoning with respect to the connection of mental and physical phenomena are all forgotten. You remember nothing save the preacher and his sermon. A boyish trick of the mind repeats itself, and you imagine he is addressing himself particularly to you. How plain his words, and yet how forcible! How simple his illustrations, and yet how

vivid! How rude and rugged his style, and yet how apt and eloquent! How clear his explanations! How impressive his earnestness! How deftly he shapes his logic, and how vigorously he presses home his conclusions! It is almost like a new revelation to you. Here is a man without culture and almost without education who has forged logic that has crushed your theories like a trip hammer—a grandly gray old optimist who in a few unstudied sentences has swept away all your well-seasoned and oft-tested props of philosophy. The fire of utter belief that burns and glows in his soul has made itself felt upon the cold fibers of the doubt that fits you as a garment. You cannot gainsay the fervor of his faith, the beautiful simplicity of his creed, or the sweet reality of his religion. You know what his reply would be to your methods of reasoning, and almost involuntarily you reply for him, carrying on silently a curious argument: "Sir, I do not understand your philosophy, and therefore I will not try to combat it. I am an old man and an ignorant man. It is not given me to understand the intellectual mysteries of your reasoning. If it gives you comfort, that is enough. My belief is a part of myself. If I am wrong, nevertheless I shall have enjoyed much happiness in my error, which, after all, is a harmless one. If I am right, with what ecstasy shall I turn and thank Death, in whatever shape he may appear, for breaking down the barriers of heaven!" But even in framing this reply for the preacher you smile to think how consciously you have avoided the hearty strength and emphasis which are his characteristics.

But the sermon is over and the prayer, and then comes the grandly sonorous anthem of dismissal. All sense of discomfort caused by the prim plainness of the building and its surroundings has vanished. Your lost youth rises and stands before you. A woman's voice, strong and sweet and clear, rises above the others and lifts itself to the roof on waves of purest melody. It is as if some one had laid a fair garland of the past at your feet. You remember another voice whose marvelous sweetness has long been lost to this old building and this little congregation. You remember a ride one Sabbath morning years ago through the long lane that stretches smilingly to the west. You remem-

ber the timid words of a fair young girl who rode by your side. You remember how in your boyish fancy the elder bushes with their milk-white crowns of blossoms nodded to you on either hand as though they shared your secret and your triumph. And then the congregation sweeps by you, the little church fades from view, and you are once more a pessimist with unscrupulous worldly tendencies.

Gentle readers—thrice gentle must you be, indeed, to have followed us thus far—believe us, that which hath not opportunity to happen is often dreamt of, and slumbers that precipitate the airy riots of the mind have no need to sue the law for pardon.

#### *GEORGIA CRACKERS: TYPES AND SHADOWS*

Correspondents of Northern newspapers, wandering aimlessly through the South in search of political material, forget their mission when they reach Atlanta. The town and its people are revelations to them. They seem to have suddenly entered a new world, and they pause to reflect over their discovery and to unravel the mystery. They find Atlanta a problem, and they straightway proceed to search for the solution. After a reasonable time they retire to the writing desks, kindly furnished by the obliging hotel men, and inform their expectant journals that in the heart of the South they have found a Northern town. They allude to it as a sign that business is bridging the bloody chasm and make much ado over the Northern energy and enterprise that have sought the place since the war and redeemed it from the dullness and death that have stood guard over nearly every other Southern city. This appears to be such a happy solution of the problem that the thrift, enterprise, energy, and growth of Atlanta are no longer regarded as phenomena to be seriously and philosophically studied. The solution is not only happy, in so far as it relieves the correspondents of their perplexities, but it is handy for our neighbors who do not care to be perplexed about anything. And so the general impression is that Atlanta is the product of Northern genius and enterprise, that her growth is the result of Northern energy, and that the city is what it is to-day by reason of Yankee pluck and capital. It seems to be general-

ly accepted, moreover, that the absence of narrow political prejudices from our business and social life is due to the same influences.

But these matters, so suggestive of reflection, will bear discussion. Did it ever occur even to our own people that the growth and material progress of Atlanta since the war are something more than astonishing; that, wholly apart from any independent or any sectional element or local comparison, they are among the most striking phenomena of the period? Show us the city, either North or South, East or West, that has relatively kept pace with Atlanta. Take the city as it stood in 1865, destroyed and well-nigh deserted, and compare it with the Atlanta of to-day. Take the city as it stood in 1870 and compare it with the Atlanta of 1879. Not a town or city in the country, so far as our knowledge and observation extend, has kept pace with us. Such progress as we have made would be accounted phenomenal in any section of the country. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that Northern correspondents should be eager to attribute such results to the spirit and impulses of their own civilization, or that our neighbors, who ought to be better influenced, should, in order to gratify the complaining ghost of a prejudice that the people of Georgia have long since buried, point to Atlanta as a city that owes everything to Northern energy and capital. In point of fact, to take an instance at random, there are ten Northern men in Atlanta, and the proportion holds good as to the capital invested; though, if we mistake not, Savannah has more than once pointed her aristocratically scornful finger in this direction and sneered about Northern people.

The point we desire to make, however, is that, in spite of all that is said, Atlanta remains a typical Georgia city. She is this above and beyond everything. The people who founded her, the people who have made her what she is, who have contributed the basis of her growth, energy, and prosperity, are Georgia crackers. They plowed heifers. They used the hoe, the pick, and the spade. They wore wool hats and walked barefoot through the keen frosts and over the chestnut burrs. They worked among the mountains of North Georgia and toiled on the red hills of Middle Georgia. They buttered their property with hope and laid

the foundation of their fortunes in the rugged lands around us and through it all faced the future with sturdy and untiring industry. The Atlanta of to-day is the result of the brains and energy of Georgia crackers, whose unique simplicity of character has run steadily to thrift and prosperity, whose quaint and homely methods have caught a cosmopolitan flavor, whose inquisitive shrewdness has flowered into an insatiable thirst for enterprise. In other words, Major Joseph Jones, of Pineville, settling in a favorable point in his native State, has there surrounded himself with a city. He has grown comfortable, and his children and grandchildren have become model men and women. Thus it is that the business and social elements of Atlanta show the Georgia cracker at his best and highest development.

It is this development which deceives the superficial observer into classing Atlanta as a city where Northern men and Northern influences control everything; and this view is helped along by the further fact that the intensely typical character of Atlanta is not only Georgian, but national. Did any of our readers of a thoughtful turn ever take the trouble to discover the remarkable points of resemblance between the typical down-easter and the typical Georgia cracker? If not, it is a matter which may well engage their serious attention. Does our friend Colonel Thompson, of Savannah, believe that Major Joseph Jones, of Pineville, a character study unsurpassed in our own literature, is popular merely because a Georgia cracker is aptly painted? Nonsense! Not one edition of the book would have been sold. The character is not only typically Georgian, but typically national; and for this reason the book has passed through manifold editions, and the demand is not yet supplied. Major Jones is Brother Jonathan thinly disguised in a suit of Georgia linsey-woolsey. We might compare the Major with Sam Slick; but we prefer to stand him up alongside of Hosea Bigelow, a serious literary study of the typical Yankee. Examine them critically, and the parallel is complete. Bring Hosea Bigelow to Georgia, turn him loose in a pine thicket, show him a bunch of dogwood blossoms, make him acquainted with the joree and the jay, give him a suit of jeans (which he would probably bring in his carpetsack), and then you have your Major Joseph Jones,

of Pineville, who is "yours till deth." Take the Major to New England, let him tamper with the climate and learn how to save his tobacco instead of giving it away, and there is your Hosea Bigelow. Being typical, they are national; being national, they are well-nigh identical. In thought, feeling, and expression they are nearly the same; and the quaint homeliness, pathetically identical in both, is, in the present unhappy state of affairs, absolutely distressing to those who look above and beyond the partisan strife of the hour. Both Thompson and Lowell were building better than they knew—the one showing a shrewd, observing Yankee who courted and married Miss Mary Stallings in Pineville, and the other introducing to us a ready-witted, simple-mannered Georgia cracker in New England. The parallel is apt to be confusing; and in the midst of the confusion we desire to repeat that Colonel Thompson's Pineville Yankee, and not Lowell's Georgia cracker from New England, has built Atlanta and given her progress wings. Naturally enough, the Major Joseph Joneses and their relations have opened their doors to the Georgia crackers from Maine and Massachusetts; and the result has been so fruitful that they want more to come with their money, their pluck, and their talent. Nevertheless, it will not do, in the face of facts, to deny that the Pinevillians and their progeny are responsible for Atlanta—her past, her present, and her future. Major Jones, proverbially genial, has become hospitable quite on the European plan in consequence of his commercial connection; and as in his business he knows neither North nor South, nor considers where the sectional line is drawn, he doesn't feel alarmed when his next-door neighbors allude to him as a Northern man and is only ashamed that the allusion should be accompanied by a sneer which may be misinterpreted and misapplied by the sensitive Mr. Bigelow. At the same time the Major is not too modest to have it known that he is the author of as smart a town as Atlanta.

#### THE PURITAN AND THE CRACKER

In endeavoring last Sunday to do tardy justice to the achievements of the Georgia cracker to be seen in the growth, thrift, enterprise, and prosperity of Atlanta we



made casual allusion to the remarkable similarity existing between the type of genuine Georgia cracker, as represented by Major Joseph Jones, of Pineville, and the type of down-east Yankee, as represented by Hosea Bigelow. As then pointed out, we might have drawn the comparison between Major Jones and Sam Slick, or between Major Jones and Jack Downing. But Sam Slick is a caricature, and Downing a mere lay figure. Both are inartistic, and neither is representative. But Major Jones and Hosea Bigelow are characters that will live because they are locally perfect and typically national. Each represents a section, and each is as identically American as the other. Their characters are the same. Their identity is the more striking because of the contrast between them. One is the hero of an episode purely pastoral in its surroundings, and the other is a provincial politician of the most intense pattern. The humor of both is unconscious, but there is a professional literary twang to Bigelow that somewhat mars the effect of the character. We are frequently aware of the fact that Hosea is waiting for applause when he says something unusually smart, and this is a defect. Major Jones, on the other hand, retains his quaint simplicity to the last, and his perfect seriousness remains undisturbed. If he had paused at the crossroads grocery to talk politics, perhaps he, like Hosea, would have talked for effect. Certainly his remarks would have been as shrewd and as homely and would have been pitched in precisely the same key, from his point of view. This contrast between the pastoral instincts of Major Jones and the political pretensions of Hosea Bigelow, while it does not disturb their resemblance to each other, is, nevertheless, perplexing in another direction. The popular idea at the North is that every Southern man is engaged in political discussion, while every Yankee is shrewdly attending to his private affairs. And yet here is Mr. Hosea Bigelow, the typical Yankee, discoursing of politics continually; while Major Joseph Jones, the typical Southern cracker, is engaged in imparting confidentially to his friend, the country editor, the installments of the only pastoral love story in American literature. How utterly these things confuse us! But this is by no means the most startling of sectional contradictions, as we shall presently see.

There were two men made famous by the events of the late war whose names will be familiar to the American people for all time to come—so familiar, indeed, that it would savor somewhat of officiousness for even the muse of history to go through the form of presenting them. The wonderful possibilities of life and the mysterious opportunities of death have already clothed them with the immortality of romance and lifted them above and beyond the influence of history. It is not fame that will preserve the names of these two men, but some subtler result of the essence of individuality, some occult quality of personal influence. We allude to Stonewall Jackson and Abraham Lincoln. History will no doubt do ample justice to the other great names of the war, but history need not pause to pay any tribute to these two. Her records are not needed to preserve their names or to tell their story. And yet observe how fate plays cross purposes with our prejudices. Recall the men and the time. The grim Puritan, flashing along the front of war, fighting the battles of the South! The quaint Kentucky cracker piloting the North to victory! How farcical these small prejudices that flare up and endeavor to burn where there is nothing for their weak embers to feed upon! How unhappy the pretense of sectionalism that would build barriers where none exist!

Can we doubt that, as the Puritan rode up and down the valley, smiting here and there through the wavering but persistent lines of blue, the psalms that were sung in old Salem when Satan seemed to encompass the Church rose once and again to his lips? Can we doubt that the pensive Southern cracker, who confused people with his humor, and whose homeliness was a perpetual surprise to men who found themselves powerless to resist his will—can we doubt that the pensive Southern cracker hummed "Dixie" to test his thoughts? It seems to us that sectionalism must stand confounded in the presence of the memory of these two men; and it is a little singular, considering the fuss of the politicians, that the character of the Confederate Puritan should be tenderly treated at the North, and that all the qualities that gave Lincoln his success should be keenly appreciated in the South. These things cannot be dwelt upon too frequently or too freely. The politico-climatic line which is

supposed to divide Americans does not exist except in the imaginations of those who have an interest in the perpetuation of sectional animosities and prejudices that grew and should have died with slavery. There is neither hatred nor prejudice between the people. They fought, and they were very much in earnest about it. They ended the war when the time came, and they were very much in earnest about that. And the stalwart editors and politicians who are engaged in abusing and misrepresenting the South do daily violence to every instinct of patriotism and outrage every impulse of true nationalism. But, after all, what pitiful figures they cut! How ineffectual their fury! How bootless their paper victories!

#### CHRISTMAS TIME<sup>1</sup>

There would be no reason, were the times ever so dull, why the *Constitution* should not turn aside from the hurly-burly of ordinary newspaper discussion to wish its readers and friends a merry Christmas. With the tide of prosperity turning in this direction, and with all the prospects fair for the future, Christmas promises to be merry enough, whether or no we make formal expression of the wish. Nevertheless, it is a good old custom, hearty and friendly, and we follow it, not formally, but gladly and cordially. To us who are old enough to be filled with reverence and affection for the past, such greetings savor somewhat of a blessing—of such poor blessing as man can bestow upon his brother. A merry Christmas! Would that ours could be borne far and wide upon the gentle winds to all the homes in the land! Would that it might hover over every hearthstone with all the graciousness of a benediction! In the olden times, to which we all fondly turn as the years lengthen out behind us, it was the custom of the little children to pass from house to house, singing the Christmas carols. Our children, like ourselves, unhappily, have become far too practical for that, and, except in the remote country settlements, their sweet young voices are no longer lifted up in song. Let us hope, nevertheless, that if the song is not upon their lips this blessed day it is in their happy hearts.

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<sup>1</sup>Compare contribution to *The Countryman*, Part I., page 58.

A merry Christmas! And yet it should be borne in mind by those whom fortune hath favored that in many a home only the wand of charity can conjure up even the ghost of charity. There are homes in this prosperous land of ours, homes here in the comfortable city of Atlanta, where Santa Claus never distributes his gifts. Many little ones awake this morning to find that the good St. Nicholas is not as generous as he has been represented to be; and who shall endeavor to explain to them why it is that he loves to lavish his gifts upon the children of the rich and passes by the children of the poor?

Once upon a time, more than a thousand years ago, a star stood in the east one Christmas night; and the wise men who saw it followed where it led until they came upon a Babe in a manger, a little Child whose mother was so poor that she was compelled to shelter herself in a stable; and yet this Child was the great Lord of all, the blessed Saviour. There is still a legend in the East which tells of how, when his birth night comes, he descends from the glory of heaven and passes out over the earth, from city to city and from house to house, bending over the little ones as they sleep and giving them his benediction as once he gave it in Galilee. Can this beautiful legend be no more than the dream of some Oriental poet? Perhaps if we who are comfortable contrive to bring the Christmas of charity to some desolate childish heart to-day, perhaps if we minister to the happiness of some lonely little one, the gracious Presence whose movements are chronicled in the Eastern legend will not forget to lean above us with a precious benediction when we grow tired even of the happiness of life.

Well, well! At least the boy with the tin horn is happy—happier than the poor woman who carries a mackerel home for dinner as the uttermost and most expensive luxury she can afford to buy. And the little children on the streets are happy. It is worth while to pause upon the crossings and watch their pretty antics, their delightful unconscious capers. Here is life and innocence and mirth for you. The birds that twitter in the springtime are not more blithe. The breezes that whirl the dust and smoke away are not more abandoned to freedom than they. A few more merry Christ-

mases, and they will be standing in our places, watching the procession of their own youngsters as it files gayly by, blowing its tin horns, beating its small drums, waiving its silken banners, and firing its toy cannon. Perhaps they will not be able to extract quite as much happiness and mirth from the Christmases to come as they do from the Christmas that is here. But why not? Why should there not be old boys and girls as well as young boys and girls? It is false pride, we warn you! Nothing else! Simply and solely false pride!

For our part, we are free to confess that nothing but a proper sense of decorum prevents us from flinging our hat under a dray, snatching a tin horn from the hands of a careless urchin, and blowing such a blast as was perhaps never heard even by the most venerable policeman on the Atlanta force. And it isn't our sense of decorum that prevents it, either. It is other people's decorum we are afraid of outraging. Bless you! there is no decorum in the *Constitution* editorial rooms on such a day as this. The Political Professor,<sup>1</sup> who is engineering the country through the dangers of sectionalism and warning the ambitious Democratic financiers not to smash things by tampering with the greenbacks, can caper as nimbly as the best of them; and we believe, if one of our commencement orators were to issue a challenge to that effect, that the Editorial Presence<sup>2</sup> itself would skip down from its antisciotic chair and make a brief but fierce attack upon the joyous movement technically known as the pigeon wing.<sup>3</sup> These are among the reasons, apart from a decent respect for editorial custom, why the *Constitution* is so eager to see a merry Christmas distributed equally among old and young, rich and poor. It would be a pity if those who have left childhood behind had also lost the faculty of becoming a child again with the children; and if there is ever a time when manhood and old age can afford to renew their frolics, that time is to-day.

Intent upon some such mission as this, the busy hands

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Harris referred to Mr. Grady as the Political Professor and to Mr. Evan P. Howell as the Editorial Presence.

<sup>2</sup>See Mr. Stanton's statement as to Mr. Harris's dancing negro shuffles, Part I.

that are engaged in making the *Constitution* will have a brief season of rest to-day. If they cannot renew their youth, at least they can contribute somewhat to the general fund of merriment afloat, and to do this they must have leisure. In order, therefore, that mince pieces may be properly digested and the general hilarity be sustained by the presence of the *Constitution* delegation, no paper will be issued to-morrow. We cannot better inaugurate the day than by wishing one and all a merry Christmas.

## LITERARY CRITICISMS, ETC.

AN ATLANTA POET<sup>1</sup>

It always affords us peculiar pleasure to chronicle the appearance of a Southerner among the guild of authors, and in the present instance the pleasure is heightened by the fact that the author is a citizen of Atlanta. Under the modest and not inappropriate title of "Wild Flowers," the Author's Publishing Co., of New York, has envolumed the fugitive poetry of Mr. Charles W. Hubner, embalming it neatly, conveniently, and attractively. Mr. Hubner has long been known as an occasional contributor of verses to the periodical literature of the day; and the popularity of these contributions has been the means of giving him considerable reputation, not only in the South, but throughout the country, albeit, owing to an oversight more singular than credible, his name does not appear among Davidson's sketches of "Living Writers of the South."

We have carefully examined Mr. Hubner's pretty little volume of poems, and we can most heartily commend it to those who delight to dally with the muse in her soberer and quieter moods. The modern school of minor poets, with Algernon Swinburne and Gabriel Rossetti at their head, seems to have had absolutely no influence whatever over Mr. Hubner. His poetry is altogether reflective. There is not even the suspicion of sensuousness about it. All is chaste, pure, and refined. He takes the hints that nature so lavishly bestows upon her lovers and attunes them to song,

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<sup>1</sup>Major Charles W. Hubner, now associated with the Carnegie Library, Atlanta, continues to write short poems. He recalls Mr. Harris's sending him a marked copy of this review.

and the notes are none the less sweet and tender because they are set to a minor key. Comparing Mr. Hubner to other Southern poets who have become famous as builders of verse, we may say that, while his philosophy is less absorbing and elaborate than that of Requier, while he lacks the fiery pungency of Randall, while he does not possess the power of nervous condensation<sup>1</sup> so apparent in the poetry of Harry Flash or the wonderful concentration and industry of Paul Hayne, there is, nevertheless, in a majority of the lyrics in the little volume before us an element of freshness and simplicity that is characteristic of none of the writers named. Mr. Hubner's verse is strengthened by the faith and earnestness that find expression therein. His methods are legitimate and artistic and invariably have for their object the exaltation of the beautiful, the good, and the true.

We have not the space to review Mr. Hubner's little volume as it deserves to be reviewed; and we are, therefore, compelled to content ourselves with a critical summary which must, in the very nature of things, be vague and unsatisfactory.

The initial pages of the little volume are taken up with a drama in three acts entitled "The Maid of San Domingo," which, we suspect, is one of Mr. Hubner's earliest productions. As a drama simply, it is a failure; but as a poem in dramatic form it is vigorous, energetic, and well sustained. It is as a writer of lyrics, however, that Mr. Hubner is at his best. His contributions to this form of poetry are conspicuous for their grace, tenderness, and felicity of style and versification, and in many instances they have the completeness of sonnets without their coldness. A fair specimen of his work in this direction is his poem entitled

*To a Mocking Bird*

"Sweet bird! that from yon dancing spray  
Dost warble forth thy varied lay,  
From early morn to close of day  
Melodious changes singing.

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<sup>1</sup>See Mr. Turner's note to Harris, Part I., page 49.

Sure thine must be the magic art  
 That bids my drowsy fancy start,  
 While from the furrows of my heart  
     Hope's fairy flowers are springing.

As changeful as the sounds thy throat  
 Sets on the charmèd winds afloat,  
 Till valleys near and hills remote  
     Attest thy peerless powers,  
 Have been to me the sights and scenes,  
 The cloudy thoughts and starry dreams,  
 The winter and the summer gleams  
     Of life's ephemeral hours.

But all thy sad or merry lays,  
 Sweet bird! in thy Creator's praise  
 Thou pourest from the trembling sprays  
     With love's delicious art;  
 Thus, too, will I, whate'er my fate—  
 In sorrow prone or joy elate—  
 To God my being dedicate  
     And give to him my heart."

This is as good in its way as the poems of Meek, Wilde, and Flash upon the same subject. Mr. Hubner's little volume closes with a collection of Æsop's fables in rhyme, which, simply as specimens of neat versification, are very fine. The book is for sale at Phillips & Crews's.

#### *"LOVE IN IDLENESS"*

Of book-making there is no end, and the grief of it is that it seems to make very little difference with the public whether the result is good, bad, or indifferent. The mania at present is to write novels, and it is perhaps just as well that it should take this mild form. There is nothing harmless about a harmless novel, an axiom in criticism that might be spun out by saying that there is nothing remarkable in a work of fiction that is commonplace. We can, therefore, without fear of raising a literary riot, commend Miss Ellen W. Olney's "Love in Idleness," which is published by Messrs. J. B. Lippincott and sent to us through the courtesy



of Messrs. J. and S. P. Richards, booksellers. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this volume (bound in paper and sold at the low price of fifty cents) is that it first appeared in serial form in *Lippincott's Magazine*. It is called "A Summer Story," and such undoubtedly it is—a story just fitted for the long afternoons when the drowsy gyrations of a small community of house flies warn the small pretenders to humanity that it is time to doze. We have not the patience to remember the plot of this summer story. There is a man engaged, in a sort of commercial and business way, to a vague woman whom he does not love and who takes advantage of this absence of affection to become desperately smitten with another vague woman who has encountered the fancy of his brother. We use the word "encountered" in this connection advisedly. There is no other word that so aptly explains the process of love-making as set forth in the modern storybook. In the volume before us all ends happily, or unhappily, as the case may be. The hero marries the woman to whom he was engaged, and the brother marries the girl who loves the other fellow. Of course nothing could be neater than this; and if the reader isn't satisfied, it is because he hasn't gone through a regular course of this sort of stuff. We take it for granted, however, that the author is capable of much better things. Her style is graphic, picturesque and terse, and there seems to be no reason why she should not at least succeed in writing a fair novel.

#### NOTES OF NEW MAGAZINES (ATLANTIC MONTHLY)

The peculiar interest with which the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* manages to invest that publication was never more manifest than in the February number. This peculiar interest is simply the result of the fact that the *Atlantic* has somehow created an atmosphere of its own. We do not mean to say that this is due to what is sometimes sarcastically called the "Boston influence," but to exceptionally careful editing. So real is this atmosphere that there is always a smart shock when a foreign amateur, like Mr. Richard Grant White or Mr. Ben: Perly Poore, with his indefatigable and irresistible colon, gains admission into the maga-

zine. Thus, for instance, while everything Mr. White writes is good, and while our friend Poore's reminiscences of Washington are of abundant interest, they seem to be somewhat out of place in the *Atlantic*, and they jar unpleasantly upon the nerves of enthusiastic readers of that periodical. In the February number Mr. Henry James, Jr., continues to dissect in a very entertaining manner the puppets which he compels to caper for our amusement in "The Portrait of a Lady." In the January installment of this serial there were dangerous symptoms that Mr. James would allow his puppets the latitude that human beings under similar conditions sometimes enjoy; but he has resolutely, if not heroically, overcome this tendency, and now his paper people are definitely attached to the artistic string upon which Mr. James has suspended them. In "Friends: A Duet," of which the fourth and fifth parts are here given, we have a piece of work in direct contrast to the colorless but unmistakable art of Mr. James; and it may be regarded as the most characteristic, the most perfectly adjusted of Miss Phelps's essays in fiction. . . . Mr. Richard Grant White, who seems to be unmerciful in matters of this kind, is "In London Again," and he writes about it so coolly and dispassionately that we cannot refrain from the suspicion that he is endeavoring to win the admiration of Mr. Lathrop's literary Boston. . . . In "The Contributor's Club" some kind soul pays a tribute to the memory of Washington Allston, the South Carolina poet and painter.

#### AS TO SOUTHERN LITERATURE

An interesting phase of the continual call for what is technically known as "Southern literature" is the accompanying demand for controversial fiction. Whether this is owing to the lack of healthy criticism or to the fact that we have been put upon the defensive so long that anything in relation to the South, its condition or its institutions, past or present, which is suspiciously critical or even severely impartial, is construed into an attack, we have not time here to consider. We suspect, however, that it is due rather to the social and political isolation in which the South sought to preserve its peculiar property investment. It is natural

that such isolation should produce remarkable pride of opinion and a belief that our civilization was perfect. The truth of the matter, however, is that the Southern people are human beings and inherited, along with the rest of the world, their full share of the virtues as well as the faults of human nature; and when the Southern novelist comes to depict life in the South as it really was and is, his work, if he be a genuine artist, will be too impartial to suit the ideas of those who have grown fat by feeding upon the romantic idea that no additional polish could be put upon our perfections. The Southern Thackeray of the future will doubtless be surprised to learn that if he had put in an appearance half a century sooner he would probably have been escorted beyond the limits and boundaries of our sunny Southern clime astraddle of an indignant rail. Thackeray satirized the society in which he moved and held up to ridicule the hollow hypocrisy of the lives of his neighbors. He took liberties with the people of his own blood and time that would have led him hurriedly in the direction of bodily discomfort if he had lived in the South. It is probable, moreover, that if Addison's essays had appeared in a Southern spectator there would have been a most emphatic protest against their slanderous hints and covert allusions to the foibles of the Miss Nancy Joneses and the Sweet Williams of society; and if the scenes of "The Vicar of Wakefield" had been laid in any Southern community, a solemn protest against the genuineness of the rattling young villain that pursued Miss Olivia Primrose would have been filed in the public prints. Now, the spice of exaggeration in these comparisons is just sufficient to bring the reality forcibly to the attention of those who are acquainted with the conditions to which we allude, but further than this it is no exaggeration. This is the reason our novelists and story writers are all romancers. This is the reason why St. Elmo, who is really a figure taken out of the "Arabian Nights" and disguised as a Southern man, builds him an impossible palace in a Georgia wilderness and opens up business by shooting a North Carolina colonel (or some other obscure person) through the haslet. It would probably be an exaggeration to say that there would have been no social safety for a native writer who set

himself down to draw an impartial picture of Southern civilization, its lights and its shadows; but every thoughtful person who has any interest in Southern literature is perfectly well aware of the limitations by which our writers have been surrounded—limitations, let us hasten to add, that fitted perfectly and exactly the inclinations and ambitions of the writers themselves.

The South knows now that slavery was a continual menace to our society, a drawback upon our civilization and a drain upon our resources, but it is not too late to say that there never was any reasonable discussion of the slavery question. The position of the South in such a discussion was impregnable. The Southern people were not responsible for the existence of slavery nor for its continuance. They purchased it from the thrifty philanthropists of New England and had no means of getting rid of it. To free them there was an impossibility; to send them back to Africa was inhuman. There were hundreds of Abolitionists among the slave owners, but they could do nothing. It was never discovered, until after the war, that Mrs. Stowe's attack upon slavery was a practical and genuine defense of the Southern slave owner. She painted him as merciful, almost imprudently lax in his discipline. The monsters in her book are of Northern birth, a fact that is not very flattering to our versatility.

We have before us as we write a remarkable example of that curious self-consciousness which is responsible for the literary limitations of our writers and which in its most strenuous shape is not less pathetic than amusing. Some time ago Mr. George W. Cable, a Southern man, wrote a novel entitled "The Grandissimes," purporting to be a picture of Creole life in Louisiana at about the period of the cession of that State to the United States. In some respects this novel is a unique work of art; in others it is not. For one thing, it is altogether too populous not to be confusing; for if the inhabitants of the book were added to the census, Louisiana would be entitled to another representative in Congress. The work is avowedly a piece of fiction, but this has not prevented the Creoles of the present day from protesting against it. Some one has sent us, indeed, a violently trashy little pamphlet embodying an anonymous

attack upon Mr. Cable for presuming to put the Creoles in a book. It is very clear that the Creoles of New Orleans look upon the novel as a personal affront. Mr. Cable's book may or may not be a genuine picture of Creole life. We know nothing as to that. But, consciously or unconsciously, he has photographed the South as it existed a little while ago. And if the Northern critics knew as much about us as they pretend, this feature of a remarkable book would have been dwelt upon with more or less emphasis.<sup>1</sup>

But we have wandered away from the point we intended to make, which is this, that if the South is ever to make any permanent or important contribution to the literature of the world, we must get over our self-consciousness and so control our sensitiveness as to be able to regard with indifference—nay, with complacency—the impulse of criticism which prompts and spurs every literary man and woman whose work is genuine. We must not forget that real literary art is absolutely impartial and invariably just. None other can endure.

#### "THE GEORGIANS"<sup>2</sup>

Some young person with well-defined purpose wrote to the *Constitution* the other day concerning the status and prospects of "Southern" literature, so called. We have no time just now to fish the matter from the depths of the wastebasket; but the core of the communication, as we remember, was the difficulty which Southern writers experience in making their way at the North. Following hard upon the announcement authorized by the editor of *Scribner's Monthly* that the July number of that magazine would contain articles from seven Southerners, and that, in addition, the editor had on hand enough acceptable matter from Southern writers to fill several issues of the *Monthly*, it was thought best to give the communication over to oblivion, albeit it would have served admirably as an excuse for some exceedingly suggestive comments. The idea that there is a

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<sup>1</sup>Compare Cable's attitude toward Harris, Introduction, page 6; also compare another reference to Cable in "The Georgians."

<sup>2</sup>By Mrs. Hammond, of Atlanta.

disposition either in Boston or in New York to ignore acceptable literary matter because it happens to be from the pen of a Southern writer is absurd. The great difficulty has been and is for Southern writers to rid themselves of certain tendencies to romanticism which are not only preposterous in themselves, but deadly in their effects upon literary art. When Southern writers divest themselves thoroughly of every trace of sectionalism and view all things from the artistic standpoint, they will find no difficulty in making their way. In fact, they will find less difficulty than the writers of any other section. Circumstances have invested everything in the literature and life of the South with profound interest, and the writer who shall truthfully present and reproduce the characters and conditions by which he has been surrounded, however narrow and provincial they may be, is sure of fame. This is true of any and all sections, but the circumstances to which we have alluded have made it particularly true of the South.

We have before us a volume (Round Robin Series: "The Georgians"; Boston, James R. Osgood & Co., 1881; pages, 322; price, \$1) which is in some sort an exemplification of what we have said. It is the first book of a Georgia author, and it is printed in Boston! It is published anonymously, in accordance with the plan of the series of which it is a part; but there are evidences in the volume itself which, while they will not be detected by the uncritical reader, are sufficient to show that the book is the first studied effort of a young writer. These evidences, let us hasten to say, are not in the shape of blemishes, but consist of a certain hasty treatment which in one or two instances, and only one or two, gives excessive formality to ordinary conversation between ordinary people.

As a whole, "The Georgians" is an admirable piece of literary work, and as such we commend it to those who are ambitious to write a novel of Southern life and society. It is at once entertaining and instructive, restful to the mind and refreshing to the moral sense, and its twofold purpose is carried out within such limitations and under such circumstances as to bring into unusual prominence the author's exquisite sense of artistic proportion. It is rare—and we say it in sorrow—that a story of Southern life is worth ana-

lyzing. As a general rule, such stories are either grossly exaggerated in style and statement, or they are silly and insipid. But here is a story which challenges attention and piques curiosity. It is not a great novel. It does not attempt to deal with the profound problems of human nature. It is absolutely unpretentious. But within the limitations fixed by the author it is the most satisfactory piece of literary work that has been done in the South since the war. We do not even except "The Grandissimes," although Mr. Cable's work betrays genius, while "The Georgians" merely drops a hint now and then that possibly its author is a genius. Mr. Cable's story is powerful and picturesque, but it is unsatisfactory as a work of art. It has too many inhabitants. As an attempt to use the novel as an allegorical painting it is unique, but its success here is inadequate. In "The Grandissimes" we have projected upon a tropical Creole background a series of pictures of Southern society as it existed up to the war and for a time thereafter. We have the cession of Louisiana and the disturbance it created standing for the Reconstruction. The result cannot but be confusing. We had almost said "distressing." It is not the pictures of society to which we object, but to the confusing timidity which suggests a totally foreign background. To take away the Creole surroundings may destroy in some degree the picturesque features of the story, but it would add greatly to its veracity as a study of Southern society. Genius, however, will have its own way, and we allude to these things here to show wherein "The Georgians" is more satisfactory as a pure literary work.<sup>1</sup>

"The Georgians," as its title indicates, deals with the history of a Georgia family, the scene being laid in and around Atlanta. Even the Russian countess, Madame Felicia Orlanoff, who is the heroine of the story, is a Georgian, and the fact that she is a countess at all rather detracts from the serious interest of the volume. It is no more necessary to the effect of the story that she should be a countess than that Marcus Laurens, the hero, should be an Italian nobleman instead of a Georgia farmer. The fact that the study

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<sup>1</sup>Compare Cable's attitude toward Harris, Introduction, page 6; also compare another reference to Cable, page 196.

of Georgia life and character is to all appearance strictly incidental and subordinate to the narrative adds zest and emphasis to its almost literal truthfulness. Within certain limitations—and very unnecessary ones, it seems to us—there is no more faithful picture of certain phases of Southern society than are given in this book. There are hints here and there—elusive and vague when we come to examine them closely—that the impulses as well as the intentions of the author have been studiously restrained, and these give a certain degree of piquancy to the people [?] that in another volume the social characterization, which is subordinate in “The Georgians,” will be pursued with a firmer hand and freer purpose.

We judge that the author of “The Georgians” is a woman. Indeed, it is simply impossible that the remarkable analysis of Madame Orlanoff’s character and emotions should have been written by a man. This analysis is keen and vivid and subtle enough to rank as a psychological study. The author of “The Georgians” has that facility of expression which is as valuable to a novelist as imagination, and here and there throughout the volume are evidences of a humor which is at once sly and discreet. There are no elaborate efforts to render the cracker and negro dialects; but wherever the attempt is made, it is successful. “The Georgians” is a genuine picture of certain phases of life and society in the South. The author seems to possess lively Southern sympathies, but these are mellowed and chastened by tenderly severe Puritan touches here and there that are altogether delightful.

In addition, and in conclusion, “The Georgians” is a pure and wholesome book from beginning to end.

#### NARRATIVES AND SHORT STORIES

##### *A COUNTRY NEWSPAPER*<sup>1</sup>

In the history of American journalism, as strange as the statement may seem, there has been but one country newspaper. There is a large class of journals technically known

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<sup>1</sup>Compare discussion of *The Countryman* in Part I, pages 48ff.



as country papers; but most of them are published within a stone's throw of a post office, and all of them, by force of necessity, are issued in some village or town. So far as we know, there has been but one exception to this, and this exception was unique in its way, not only in the place of its publication, but in the style of its editorials and the method of its arrangement. It was published in the State of Georgia, county of Putnam, nine miles from any post office or town, and its success was wholly dependent upon the individuality of its editor. It originated in a desire on the part of a Southern gentleman of ample means and large culture to address the people on matters of public concern. The name of this unique little publication was *The Countryman*, and it was published upon the plantation of Mr. J. A. Turner, nine miles from Eatonton. In the prospectus printed in the first number, which was issued in the spring of 1862, it was announced that *The Countryman* would be modeled after Addison's little paper, *The Spectator*, and Johnson's little paper, *The Bee*, and for a while the promises of the prospectus were fulfilled. But *The Countryman* gradually grew even beyond the anticipations of its editor. It became immensely popular, was enlarged, and, suiting himself to the demands of a larger and less cultivated audience, the style of the editor became less intensely literary, until finally he came to write almost entirely in what Mr. James R. Randall, the poet, who is quite a dandy among literateurs, called "the choice Georgia dialect." The style, therefore, albeit the editor was a scholar in the truest and widest sense of that word and possessed to a most remarkable degree the gift of expression, became as unique as the publication itself. Word fanciers would have called it hopelessly commonplace. Fine writing was altogether ignored, and colloquialisms took the place of the diction of the schools. This peculiarity was intensified by the announcement of the editor that, following the example of William Cobbett, he would use the pronoun "I" instead of the royal pronoun "we," and thenceforth the essays were as remarkable for their personality as for their originality.

But the country paper thrived. The echoes of the clash and clang of war never reached the quiet printing office buried in the deep woods of a Southern plantation. The

brown squirrels rushed over the roof with the untameable and yet uncertain velocity that seems natural to the wind and to wild animals. The birds twittered in the trees. The melodious voice of the negro rose from the green depths of the long and level cornfields. The peace of an eternal Sabbath brooded perpetually over the pastoral scene, and it was only when one more beloved than the rest had starved in the cold and grim fastnesses of Laurel Hill or breasted the sultry thunder of Gettysburg that the people of that quiet plantation remembered the war that was raging upon the outside. The bright-eyed country girls came to view the mysterious workings of the clumsy hand press; and their mild wonder seemed to protest against the possibility that a brawny-armed printer, humbly aided by a blushing roller boy, could accomplish such a remarkable result as the manufacture of a newspaper. It was a golden time. The compositors, imported from sections where the rules of society had been crystallized into canons, gradually made advances to the timorous maidens who came to investigate the mysteries of the black art, and more than one pure and sweet little love idyl was enacted in that section before the summer's victory had faded into the autumn of defeat. The sweetness of peace dwelt in the air. Somewhere in the dim distance war was trailing his black mantle across the dusty, sun-smitten regions of the South. But in the neighborhood of this country newspaper its dismal rustle was not heard; and if perchance a warrior was slain in the Virginia valley, he was mourned as one who had fought and fell in a foreign land. The tall pines nodded to the passing breeze and dispensed the balm of their resinous odors to the lovers below. The flowers bloomed, the sun shone, and the birds sang. Of the compositors who aided in giving to the public this original little newspaper, two (Heaven rest their souls!) are dead. One, who by his rollicking mood gave zest to many a long evening and whose congeniality endeared him to his companions, is now the proprietor of the most widely circulated religious newspaper in Georgia.<sup>1</sup> Another is editing a weekly newspaper in West Virginia. Another is at

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. J. P. Harrison. See references in Part I. and account of life in Forsyth.

the head of a paper in North Georgia. Another is a successful shoemaker, and still another has drifted into agriculture. While, last and not least, he who remembers all these things perhaps more keenly than the rest sits at the feet of a fat professor of politics and contributes to the trash that constitutes the newspaper literature of the day.

#### *SEWARD'S GEORGIA SWEETHEART<sup>1</sup>*

In an article which appeared in these columns some days ago reference was made to "A Country Newspaper," an ideal journal of the pastoral regions that flourished in Putnam County during the war. This country newspaper was edited and printed almost within a stone's throw of the ruins of the rude academy which some years before had resounded to the voice and ferrule of William H. Seward, a politician who afterwards played such an important part in shaping the affairs of the country at a most critical period of its history.

Seward, it appears, becoming vexed, as young men will, at the too practical precepts of a Puritanical father, cut loose from the ties of home and came to the South in the somewhat frayed rôle of the prodigal son. Fresh from college and familiar with the books, he betook himself to teaching; and, answering an advertisement of the trustees of Union Academy, he became the principal thereof and for a period essayed to enlighten and mold the plastic minds of those whom he afterwards alluded to as Southern barbarians. He was hospitably treated, however, and, as the tradition goes, became warmly attached to many of those whom he regarded as no less his benefactors than his patrons. The parental wrath which had driven him from his home was soothed by that great healer of large and small quarrels, Time, and ere he had brandished the rod many months he received an invitation from his father to return to his old home and receive the parental blessing. A teacher named Woodruff was sent out to take his place; and young Seward went back to his father's house, became a politician, was elected Governor of New York, and finally became Lin-

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<sup>1</sup>Compare "Proemial to Putnam," page 221.

coln's Secretary of State, with a little bell at his hand that became the terror of the "nation." Some years before the war he revisited the scene of his youthful experience as a pedagogue and renewed his old acquaintances among his patrons and pupils.

Years and years afterwards a young man, one of the composers upon *The Countryman*, wandering through an old country mansion in the neighborhood, came upon an old and much-worn duodecimo copy of Marryat's "Jacob Faithful." Turning over its yellow leaves curiously and carelessly, he came upon a lock of yellow hair, that in another age and in a stronger light might have been called red or auburn, enclosed in a yellow letter. This letter was written by young Seward to a country lass in the neighborhood; and albeit its style took color from the somewhat coldly polite forms of that day, it breathed unmistakably of the true love that comes to a man, whether he be peasant or prince, but once in a lifetime. The diplomacy that the young lawyer and politician saw fit to use in addressing an unsophisticated country lass whom he was nevermore destined to meet could not hide the fervency of his feelings, and it seems more than probable that the Putnam County maiden received the first, last, and only real *love* letter ever written by William H. Seward. There is reason, moreover, for believing that in all the turmoil of politics in which he afterwards engaged he never forgot the sweetheart of his youth, who lived and died in the pastoral obscurity of Putnam. She never married; but for many and many a summer, stirred by the sultry winds or shaken loose by the wandering bees, the apple blossoms have drifted down upon her resting place, which lies hid by the tall and tangled grasses of the old orchard. Her name is a memory, her life a dream, her love a myth; but neither memory nor myth can disturb her slumbers now.

### A GUZZLED GUEST

HOW TOOMBS PROTECTED A MILD YOUNG MAN FROM THE KU-KLUX  
Smalley's Adventures in a Bad Georgia Hamlet—Marching to the  
Music of the Town Boys and Trembling upon the Brink of Uncertainty—A Vigil with the Doughfaces and an Early Ride Out of the Country.

Once upon a time a correspondent of the New York *Tribune*, whose surname was Smalley, journeyed South upon an "interviewing" mission. He had been instructed—or at least let us suppose that he had been instructed—to visit various prominent Southern leaders at their homes, converse with them, and embody their ideas in a series of sensational articles purporting to be "interviews." The correspondent selected to perform this delicate task was named Smalley; and, for all we know to the contrary, he is named Smalley to this day. His career through the South was a great success until he reached Washington, in Wilkes County, and there he made a failure. He pounced upon Toombs; and Toombs, it is not too much to say, sat down upon him with considerable vehemence. Smalley, I am told, is a right clever young man. He is from Philadelphia and has probably associated a good deal with Chevalier Forney and other journalistic bucks of that saintly city. As to his personal appearance, I know nothing; but, judging from the descriptions I have had of him, he parts his hair in the middle, wears side whiskers, chews cinnamon, and has altogether the appearance of the haughty man of genius who plays the base violin in a negro minstrel troupe.

Washington, it must be remembered, is a bad town. It is the dwelling place of such unscrupulous patriots as Dr. Henry F. Andrews, of the *Gazette*, who carries his medicine chest around with him to press conventions, and is the abode of such fierce citizens as Col. Fred J. Ludette, who writes, compiles, and arranges pretty much all the local matter for the Doctor's paper. Washington, as I have said, is a bad town. It was a bad town before the war and still prides itself upon the distinctive features by which it has been made famous. It was to this bad town on one fine morning not many years ago that Mr. Smalley came. At that time the boys were rather wild, and as the *Tribune* correspondent marched up the street he became suddenly aware that he was involuntarily keeping time to the music of a well-organized band of whistlers. It was embarrassing, to be sure; but what could he do? When a parcel of young men conclude to whistle a stranger down the wind, he has no possible remedy, albeit it is exceedingly aggravating to be

compelled to keep time to music which is neither of your making nor choosing. In a small and bad town like Washington you cannot help yourself. You are compelled either to march to the tune the young men provide for you or sit bodily down upon the sidewalk. The first is embarrassing and the latter exceedingly undignified. Smalley chose to be embarrassed, and the consequence was that he paced up the sandy street to the hotel in a manner quite as unconsciously humorous as the party who affected to play an imaginary trombone at the funeral of "Tennessee's Partner."

In spite of all this, however, Smalley reached the tavern in safety, wiped the dust and perspiration from his chin, ate a hearty dinner of corn bread and buttermilk, and then sallied forth to find General Toombs.

"Can you tell me," said he, addressing the expressive jowl which stood forth as the most important and prominent feature of the landlord's physiognomy, "can you tell me where I can find General Toombs?"

"Why, Lor' bless you! Ef Bob's in town, I kin tell. He 'lowed the other day that he wuz gwine off ter 'ten' cote; but ef he's 'roun', I kin p'int him out to you in two shakes of a sheep's tail."

With this the landlord with a hearty jowl stepped briskly to the door and, shading his eyes with his hand, soon singled out in one of the various groups a portly old gentleman crowned with a mass of silvery gray hair.

"Bob! O Bob! Drap over; here's a man wants to see you."

General Toombs, with a half-chewed cigar in his mouth and a pleasant smile on his expressive face, rose from the discussion of some political question and approached.

"Is this Gen. Robert Toombs?" asked Smalley.

"That is my name," answered the General.

"My name is Smalley," said the stranger. "Probably you have heard of me."

"Probably," said the General. "I hear of a good many people. I am always hearing of people. I hear of everybody, and a good many hear of me."

"I am the correspondent of the *Tribune*," explained Smalley with a little flourish, "and I have come here to investigate these Ku-Klux matters."

"Ah!" replied the General. "And do you propose to remain with us long? I shall be glad to see more of you. As to these Ku-Kluxes, now"—smiling one of his sweetest smiles—"how do you propose to catch them? and what are you going to do with them when they are captured? I'm a little interested in the result. Quite a number of my friends are mixed up in that business."

"So, then, there is really such an organization?" queried Smalley with considerable animation.

"Why, my dear sir," said General Toombs, lowering his voice to a confidential tone and glancing around cautiously, "if you were to compel me to turn State's evidence, there are fifteen men in sight at this moment who would be your prisoners in less than an hour."

"Why, you don't mean to say, General"—

"Yes, sir. This is unquestionably the warmest climate on the globe for niggers and Northern men. Why, even the fleas wear pistols around their waists, and the mosquitoes are malicious enough to hunt for blood with daggers."

Smalley smiled and complacently stroked his mutton chop whiskers. General Toombs, however, was earnest.

"Mr. Smalley," said he, "do you propose to remain in town to-night?"

"Certainly, sir."

"Have you your permit?"

"My what?"

"Your permit. Strangers who visit our town, especially strangers from the North, are generally murdered in their beds, but I think I can show you a way out of your difficulty. Do you see that man over there?" pointing to a dapper little German Jew, who was standing in front of a dry goods store and who looked as though he would faint if circumstances compelled him to slaughter even a bedbug. "Do you see that man? He is the Grand Cyclops of all the Klans in this region; and if you are to remain here all night, it would be only prudence on your part to see him and get what we call a 'certificate of safety.' Otherwise I am afraid it would be impossible for me to promise any protection."

Here Smalley began to show symptoms of great uneasiness and seemed anxious to make arrangements for securing the certificate.

"Just go to Mr. Franklin," said General Toombs, "introduce yourself, and apply for protection. Of course he doesn't desire to implicate himself in this Ku-Klux business, and it is likely he will pretend to be greatly astonished and mystified and will protest that he knows nothing at all of the matter. You seem to be a right clever fellow, and it is possible that you will be able to convince Franklin that it is his duty to protect you. If you fail," continued the General, looking grave and thoughtful, "come around to my house. I'll see what I can do. But don't mention my name."

The seriousness with which General Toombs imparted this information had its effect upon Smalley, who became thoroughly frightened before the evening was over. It would be well, however, to allow General Toombs to tell the story in his own words:

"He was a right starchy fellow; but even his side whiskers couldn't hide his conceit, and I thought it would be well to give him a Ku-Klux primer and start him to the school of experience."

"Was he an apt scholar, General?"

"The best you ever saw. He went to Franklin for his certificate of safety, and Franklin was astonished beyond measure. Smalley was persistent, so persistent, indeed, that Franklin became frightened, and it seemed to be only a question of time as to which would get out of town first."

"Did you see Smalley after this?"

"See him? Why, the man haunted me. He was even afraid to go to the hotel, and I met him about dusk wandering near my house. Of course I invited him in. He refused to go to bed, however, and I was compelled to sit up with him. But it was my fault. I told him that my house was liable to be attacked at any moment by a crowd of Ku-Klux murderers, and the consequence was I couldn't even persuade the man to nod in his chair. It was very amusing."

"And yet, General, Smalley paid you some high compliments in his report of the interview?"

"Why, of course. What else could he do? I treated him well and saved him from the vengeance of the Ku-Klux Klan and, for my own amusement, sent him off in my buggy the next morning before day."

"Before day?"



"Why, certainly. I told him it would be well to leave town as soon as possible after the occurrences of the day before, and he left. He ought to be grateful. But he amused me, and I like to be amused. Sometimes I laugh at Smalley just before I go to sleep, and I have had so much fun out of the fellow that I really think I ought to give him a pension. A man ought to pay for his pleasures."

Such is a brief and hastily written account of Mr. E. V. Smalley's interview with General Toombs. It may be that both of them will claim that it is inaccurate; but if so, I shall plead a lapse of memory, for it has been many weeks since the General in his inimitable way related to me the particulars of the stuffing.

### *ON WINGS OF WIND*

#### CLEAVING TO THE AIR AT THE RATE OF A MILE TO THE MINUTE

An Hour with Tom Bussey on the Foremost Position—What Tom Is Like and Who He Is—Breathing Mechanism's Response to the Caressing Touch—A Mistaken Cow and a Very Badly Mistaken Passenger.

It is possible you don't know Tom Bussey; and if you did, it would make no sort of difference. I should write about him all the same. Of course it would be impossible for me, single-handed and alone, to stand up and defy a community of gentle readers, especially on Sunday; but I must have my say about Tom Bussey, the man who upon a certain occasion some months ago drove a special train from Atlanta to Chattanooga. In all probability you have never been an engineer—that is to say, you have never been the driver of a locomotive. I make this remark with great confidence, for the reason that it falls to the lot of a few men in this wide, wide world of ours to lay a confident hand upon the polished lever that controls and directs the impatient palpitations of a steam engine. These few are necessarily men of great experience, nerve, and courage, ready for any emergency, and prepared at a moment's warning to encounter one of those direful accidents or collisions that now and then send a thrill of horror through the land. The driver of a locomotive, you must remember, assumes grave responsibilities. He must not only be familiar with the mysteries

of machinery, he must not only be alert and watchful, but he must be a man of extraordinary nerve and coolness. By a mere motion of his hand he can send hundreds of souls into eternity, or he can save them from the most horrible of calamities. The slightest miscalculation, a moment of forgetfulness, a puff of steam too much is sufficient to precipitate a dire mishap. You who travel on railroads are little used to allow your minds to dwell upon the dusty man in whose blackened hands your safety lies. Leaning placidly back in an elegantly furnished parlor car, it would be unpleasant to you to conjure up the ghastly probabilities that signal you at every curve and that gather thick and ominous at every crossing. Ah, no! The subject would be unpleasant. You prefer to allow your thoughts to rhyme and chime to the rhythmical clatter of the wheels beneath you until finally every idea that you have conforms itself to the monotonous and yet not unpleasant cluckity! clickerty! clockity! cluckity! of the machinery beneath you. For aught you know, death may be waving his scarlet flag just beyond. But what odds? Is there not a man employed to watch these things for you?

*Tom Bussey*

But I was talking of Tom Bussey. I was inveigled by an exceedingly kind note of invitation from B. W. Wrenn and the solicitations of numerous fellow sufferers from Savannah, who were driven from their homes by the presence of the yellow fever plague, to accompany an excursion to Chattanooga. The schedule was advertised as an exceptional one, and I might as well say just here that it was exceptional. The time made was a little beyond anything I have experienced before or since, save when Ned Purcell on a memorable occasion rushed a delayed train through from Dearing to Atlanta. There is something exhilarating in the thought that you are being safely whirled through the air at the rate of a mile a minute, and I became possessed of an uncontrollable desire to ride upon the engine. This desire, I have since become convinced, was the result of a species of insanity brought about, no doubt, by the swift motion of the cars. I am thus particular to denominate it insanity

because I am morally certain, after my experience, that no sane man could ever desire to ride upon a locomotive knowing beforehand that his breath would be taken away and his nerves unstrung.

However, call it what you will—insanity, expectation, or ignorance—I soon found myself upon the engine, and here I was unceremoniously introduced to Tom Bussey. I wish you could have seen Tom that day. He had on a blue jacket, a pair of blue pants, and a tightly fitting cap; and he smiled so sweetly upon me withal, showing his white teeth and arching his finely shaped eyebrows, that I felt quite captivated. And he was cheerful, too, was Tom, and talkative, but never for one moment did he allow his attention to be called from the business he had in hand. At the first glance I wondered how it was that boys were allowed to drive locomotives; but before I concluded my engagement with Tom I discovered that, so far as experience was concerned, he was worth half a dozen grown men. He never left his position, but remained alert, vigilant, and watchful, with one hand upon the lever gauge and the other occasionally patting the lever itself in a caressing way, as though to say: "You are on trial now, little girl. Put in your best licks over this grade and show the gentleman what you can do on a pinch." And every time he put in his carresses the beautiful machinery responded with a throb that would have been startling had it been not so pleasant.

### *A Hummer*

"You have a very neat locomotive, Mr. Bussey."

"She's a hummer, sir, a regular hummer. It seems like a pity to strain her, but she's jumping along now in a way that looks like business. If you will just look ahead, sir, and try to separate the crossties with your eyes, you will discover that we are not lingering anywhere on the road."

The passenger endeavored to comply with this remarkably reasonable request, but he grew dizzy and allowed the crossties to separate themselves.

"I could let her out several links yet," continued Tom Bussey, smiling pleasantly; "but I am eight minutes ahead, and eight minutes in a rush like this is equal to an hour of regular schedule time."

The passenger, clutching nervously at anything in reach that seemed to offer a safe anchorage, raised his eyes toward the smoke-bedimmed sky and thanked heaven that Tom Bussey *was* eight minutes ahead of schedule time. Why, suppose he had been eight minutes behind and had unwound the several links which were stored away somewhere in the mysterious recesses of the machinery which he controlled so coolly and lightly! I confess to you that I should have wished myself away from Tom Bussey and his locomotive; and even as it was, I longed, with a longing that could lay claim to no literary origin, for a quiet nook in the Young Men's Library. We were galloping along at the rate of fifty-seven miles to the hour, and I shuddered to think that the smiling boy on the other side might develop a barbarous tendency to cram in the other three miles. It is possible that I may be tempted to ride on another engine. I may be gagged and bound and thrown aboard of one, or the Federal troops may be called in to suppress my nervousness. But in the absence of any of these contingencies, I shall take pleasure hereafter in occupying a rear seat in the rear car.

### *Catching a Cow*

"There's a cow just ahead," said Bussey, who had never once taken his hand from the lever nor his eyes from the track, "and she's going to be badly fooled."

"How?" inquired the nervous passenger.

"Why, you see, sir, she thinks we are running the regular schedule, and she'll get caught."

With this he reached over his head, touched a loop, and the whistle shrieked three or four warnings that could be heard for miles around. The cow would not be warned, however; and the nervous passenger, anticipating a crash that would forever relieve all concerned of the troubles of life, closed his eyes and awaited results. There was no crash, however; and when he looked again, Tom Bussey was coolly inspecting his gauges.

"Did you kill her?" asked the nervous passenger.

"O no"—paying the tribute of a smile to the inexperience of his guest—"she ain't hurt. We struck her just as she started to leave the track, and there she sits in front of the

smokestack just as easy and neat as you please. She's traveling now"—with another smile—"on her face. She ain't got any ticket in her hat nor any pass in her pocket."

Under other circumstances the passenger might have laughed at the joke, but he was too busily employed in learning the art of holding on. And he did learn it. And he learned, moreover, how to get off; for when the engine stopped for a moment in order that General McRae might send a telegram forward, the nervous passenger crawled out of the cab, found his way to the hindmost coach, and fell, exhausted, into the stalwart arms of Sam Corley, who was the conductor of the train. Four hours later, wandering around the streets of Chattanooga with Benny Ferrill and Martin Wyllly, of Savannah, I met a spruce-looking little man with a flower in his buttonhole, who bowed and smiled as he passed. It was Tom Bussey, and he looked as little like the intrepid boy who had slung the centennial excursion train to Chattanooga (Wrenn will perhaps pardon me for not paying a passing tribute to the Kennesaw Route) as the amateur looks like Othello when he has washed his olive jaws in rose water and made them white again.

### *A Stalwart Engineer*

Speaking of engineers reminds me of Dell Tant, who runs a train on the Georgia Road. He is one of the most vigorous specimens of manhood to be found anywhere. I was telling Tant of the neat style in which Bussey picked up the cow.

"Well," says he, "a cow is like a woman. Whenever you catch either on the track, you have got to be mighty tender with your steam, for she is bound to try to make a crossing. They don't seem to want to get off the track where there is no road, and they won't until they see that they are bound to be run over; and even then the cow generally leaves her hind legs under the engine, and the woman allows the pilot to take off a yard or so of flounces."

Here there was a little laugh in the crowd, in which Tant, who appears to be about twenty-eight years of age, did not join. He was evidently in a serious mood. Squaring his broad shoulders, he continued:

"You would be astonished to see what risks people take. They seem to have no fear whatever. It makes my hair stand on end to see them fooling around as they do. You see, an engineer, who appreciates all the risks and all the danger, is bound to believe that people have sense enough to keep out of the way. When I catch a man on the track, I am obliged to believe that he will get off before the engine has a chance to catch him. But sometimes he don't, and then the public talk of the carelessness of engineers. It makes me sick to think of the chances people take."

"Yes," says Bill Rainey, another engineer on the Georgia Road, "and there's another mighty curious thing in my experience. Let a man be drunk in two miles of a railroad, and I'll be hanged if he don't find it and go to sleep on it. Don't you remember, Tant, the man you run over on the Macon and Augusta Road?"

#### *How Whisky and an Engine Wrecked a Man*

"Yes, I do," said Tant, "and I didn't get over it fast, either. You see, Rainey here was on the engine, and I thought I'd go back into the train and have a talk with the conductor. I stayed out a few minutes, and when I got back and relieved Rainey I saw a black bundle on the track. Day was just breaking, and the headlight didn't show well; but I concluded it was a bush or something left on the rails by the track raisers. We were a little behind, and I was giving my engine the hickory pretty lively. I made no effort to slacken; but when I got a little nearer I saw it was a man on the track with his knees drawn up. I blew on the brakes, reversed the engines, and put on a full head of steam; but it was too late. Gentlemen, I couldn't explain to you how I felt when I saw there was no hope for the man. You would have to experience it yourselves."

"You were white as a ghost," said Rainey.

"I had need to be," replied Tant. "We went back to look after the man; and I tell you, gentlemen, you never saw such a sight as that was. We could only tell that it was a man by his face and his shoes. He was literally torn all to pieces. There was a basket near by containing a piece of bacon and a bottle of whisky. The basket was wrecked and

the bacon slightly injured, but—would you believe it, gentlemen?—the bottle didn't have a wound or a scar."

### *Some Cider*

"That's a good tale," said Jeff Wood, looking benign and suspicious.

"It's true, though," says Tant.

"Yes," says Rainey, "I was there."

"Well, if that's the case," said some one in the crowd, "let's all go and have some cider."

There was not a dissenting voice save that of Wood, who pulled a bottle of ice water from his pocket and drank it standing.

J. C. H.

### *TALE OF TWO TRAMPS*

#### *HUMAN LIFE AS SEEN IN DIFFERENT MOULDS*

A Tramp Printer Discusses the Ways of the World in a Manner Peculiar to the Craft—A Singing Frenchman Passing along the Highway of Life.

#### I

It was spring. The jay bird, perched upon the topmost bough of the oak tree, was boldly and harshly proclaiming the fact. All nature had drifted into the newborn season; and if anything else were lacking to make sure that spring had begun her benignant reign, it was only necessary to look up and behold a lone swallow twittering and quivering in the far fields of heaven. It was a day to wander forth into the suburbs and lose yourself in the cool, green depths of the woods that lie in the grandeur of perpetual repose beyond the city limits. As Swinburne would remark, a bird overhead sang, "Follow!" and another bird sang, "Here!" But the invitation was not accepted; for how can a newspaper man accept every invitation that is extended him in these days of puffery and appreciation, unless, indeed (to paraphrase Algernon Charles's verse), a friend down the street cries "Follow," and another one calls out "Beer"? As it was, I sneered at the birds, albeit inwardly enjoying their light and feathery freedom, and betook myself to the somewhat commonplace and thankless task of advising unrepent-

ant and vainglorious editors to cease their untimely discussions of convention issues. I was engaged in this profitless business when suddenly the door slowly opened, and there appeared upon the threshold the figure of a puffed and bloated and burly person whose drunkenness as he swayed to and fro in the doorway seemed to be perfectly gratuitous. The man whose thoughts had but a moment before been divided between spring and the convention question thought it best to deal facetiously with the large area of intoxication which had thus unexpectedly presented itself.

"Why, howdy, Jones! Come right in and make yourself at home. We've been expecting you."

"Jones be damn! Do I look like a man named Jones? Search me. Fling me down and take out my visiting cards and see if my name's Jones. What sorter game are you trying to play on me now?"

"Well, of course, Jones, if you are going to deny your patronymic, you can't blame me. It's a mighty easy thing to go back on your relations. When did you change your name?"

"Change nothing. Next thing you know you'll be calling me a burglar and ask me where I made my last raise. I ain't changed my name, and my name ain't Jones, and I ain't no burglar, and I ain't robbed no bank. That's what you'd call—let's see—that's what you'd call autobiography on a small scale, ain't it?"

"Certainly, colonel."

"Colonel of what?"

"Why, a colonel of society—something of that kind, you know."

"Well, you can't come that game on me, Colonels don't get hungry in this country; and if they do, I ain't that sort of a colonel. I'm hungry right now, and I wouldn't mind tackling a cooked cow."

"Well, but a colonel"—

"O, I know what a colonel ought to be. He ought to be either an insurance man or some sort of a commercial agent, and he oughtn't to be hungry, either."

"Well, come in and have a seat."

"That's some consolation, anyhow, 'squire; but a cheer



with me in it and me with no dinner for two days is a mighty empty concern."

Looking closely at the puffed and ungainly person of the tramp, I discovered that he was an old acquaintance. We had set type together years ago, but there was no effusiveness in his recognition when I brought this fact to his attention. His reply, however, was characteristic. Drawing a breath so long and deep that a professional novelist would at once have translated it into a heart-rending sigh, he said:

"Well, some folks is born to luck, and some ain't. Some go up, and some go down. Some get along, and some don't. I'm one of the don'ts."

"It has been a long time since we met."

"That's so, 'squire, that's so. And enduring of that time I've seen hell, and a heap of it. I've tramped around considerable for a young man."

"Where have you been?"

"It 'ud take me a whole week to tell you, and then I'd have to hire a private secretary. First, I went to New York. I had forty-nine dollars in cash money when I landed in the mornin', and by dinner time I didn't have enough to rent a place on the sidewalk where I could eat a piece of orange peelin' in peace. I was on the town."

"Who got your money?"

"O, the boys. I give it up to the gang. They went through me. I felt as lonesome as a spring chicken at a camp meetin'. My comb was cut, and I really believe that if I had crawled into the bunghole of a molasses hogshead for a night's lodging some of the chimney sweeps would have sucked me out next morning through a straw. That was my first term at school, so to speak. But I've graduated. I've got so now that when I have money it gets in my way. It worries me like everything. But I ain't been worried much for the past year."

"Well, how do you manage to get along?"

"I don't get along. I just live. I'm sufferin' right now for some red liquor; and if I don't get it, somebody's got to hand in their chips—I don't say who. I don't make no threats, but things is culminatin'. The liquor's got to come."

"You say you've been all around?"

"From Maine to Mexico and halfway back again; and if

there was any fun going on, I generally got what I was entitled to."

"How did you get along?"

"Jaw, cheek, lip. Gimme a good suit of clothes, and I'll go all over the country free. Jaw is a mighty good thing in a rough-and-tumble argument with a tavern keeper, but you've got to have clothes."

"Well, how do you get away with hotel keepers?"

"Talk. I talk all the time and keep on talking. A man can use his tongue like he does his hand. He can hit a big lick with it, or he can be mighty loving. I've struck 'em sometimes where I've actually had to go out and buy a dollar-and-a-half trunk."

"Buy a trunk! What for?"

"O, for looks. Looks is everything; and next to clothes, a new trunk is the best. Why, you just go out and buy you a trunk, put twenty-four bricks and a black cravat in it, and damme if you ain't solid for four weeks. The hotel niggers will swear you've got gold in the box, and they'll dance around you worse'n a lot of cannibals around a fat missionary. If you don't want to get the bricks—why, you just get you eight screws and you fasten your trunk down to the floor; and when the proprietor sends a nigger to test your baggage, you can just bet your life he will make a good report. A man can board eight weeks on twenty-four bricks if he backs up the weight with his jaw. A man can get along well enough on good clothes; but with good clothes and a dollar-and-a-half trunk, he can be mighty sumptuous. I'm talkin' sense now, sure's you're born."

"Do you always find it so easy?"

"O well, I stuck type till I struck North Carolina, and there I couldn't make money enough to get out of the derned State nohow I could fix it. Then I joined a circus. I driv' tent pins for a week or two, and then I was promoted to tend to the hosses, and I kept on risin' till I got to drivin' the steam pianner. It was Haight's circus. You know Andrew Haight. Well, he's a hellian on wheels, you bet. You oughter seen me in the procession with them four little ponies, all tangled up in the reins and a-pawin' the air. We was a sight, I tell you, and we always caught the crowd."

"Are you working now?"

"O, I'm sorter puttin' in a lick here and a lick there till I can get me some good clothes, and then I'm goin' to board at some of the summer resorts. Can't you set a fellow up for some liquor and a chaw of tobacco?"

## II

I was sitting at home one Sunday evening a few weeks ago playing with a pair of very "obstropulous" little boys—I believe "obstropulous" is the word—when suddenly I heard some one going along the street humming the words of a French song, a song that was very familiar, for the reason that I had many and many a time heard a little woman I know sing it to one or the other of the boys who were at that moment ripping and rearing up and down the piazza. It was some trifle about the evening bells, and, as near as I can remember, the verse which the passer-by was singing was as follows:

"Quand les cloches du soir,  
Avec leur voix sonore  
A ton cœur solitaire  
Viendront parler encore;  
Quand tu n'aura d'ami  
Ni d'amour pres de toi—  
Pense a moi, pense a moi,  
Pense a moi, pense a moi!"

The oldest little boy heard it too, for he paused in his play and in baby fashion challenged the man who was singing.

"Hey O!" he bawled.

The man turned and smiled. It was growing dark, but it was not too dark to see the gleam of his white teeth through his unkempt beard. Pausing thus, he detected a probable welcome in the laughing faces of the little children, whereupon he made bold to open the gate and enter the yard. His vocation was unmistakable. He was a tramp. Every thread of his frayed and dirty garments, every patch, every movement of his not ungainly person proclaimed the fact. He came forward with his greasy cap in his hand. Would

monsieur permit him to look at the beautiful little babies? It will be perceived that the tactics of the man were admirable. "Monsieur," thus delicately flattered, had no objection whatever, and the little woman whose delight it is to pet and spoil these same babies had still less.

Thus I met with Antoine Cadoret. Seated upon the lowest step of the piazza, he told us the story of his wanderings. He was a French Canadian and came from St. Hyacinthe, in the province of Quebec. He was now on his way from Florida to his Northern home, and—would monsieur believe it?—he had eaten nothing for twelve hours.

This, the reader will admit, was far, very far removed from the usual style of soliciting. The suggestion was graceful, and the result, as far as our poor larder extended, was gracious.

Had he traveled much? Ah! yes, very much. When the good God took away his mother and his sister, he became a wanderer. He had been a farmer, a fireman upon a locomotive, a vendor of plaster-of-Paris figures, a violinist in an orchestra, a tenor in a negro minstrel show. Did he get along well? Thank heaven, yes! The people were kind. Why did he not remain in the negro minstrel business? Didn't it pay?

"Ah! monsieur, you cannot know. I was not free. I did not belong to myself. I could not face the big lights, and when the people give me encore they raise a dust that was stifling. I ask myself, 'What do I here?' and my heart make answer and say: 'You do nothing.' There were no more trees, no more sunshine. It was all night. And then the dust. Ah! monsieur, you cannot know of the greatness of the dust and the heat. It was not like the broad road. There they have the dust, but also they have the air. Ah! that is something—the air! But then we cannot have all things."

"Did you quit the minstrels?"

"Well, yes, monsieur. I could not stay."

Antoine Cadoret was a character. There is no doubt of that. He was a tramp, but he did not carry the credentials of one. There was no trace of whisky about him. He was dirty and yet not repugnant; he was communicative and yet not impertinent.

"Would you like something to eat?"

"Well, monsieur can judge," with that indescribable deprecating shrug of the shoulders and gesture of the hands that only a Frenchman can make. "I have had no food for twelve hours."

At this juncture the little woman who is responsible for my domestic comforts spoke to him in his native tongue, using such colloquialisms as would remind him of his home in the province of Quebec. I wish you could have seen the face of this poor wanderer, Antoine Cadoret. It was a study. Tears came into his eyes, and for a moment he could not speak. And then he began to rattle off his French thanks in a way that was quite bewildering; but the "madame" had gone to get him a supply of provisions, so that this surprising volubility was altogether wasted. When his rations did appear, he seized upon them with an avidity and dispatched them with an earnestness that would have done credit to a Confederate soldier in the Virginia campaign. The children presided at the dinner and, in spite of all the "madame" could say or do, insisted upon having their share of Cadoret's viands—"viands," I believe, is the regulation word.

His meal apparently stimulated his volubility. He talked of himself and of Canada, of his mother and his sister, who were dead long ago—of everything. He was a man of ideas and education, but his passionate love of nature had made him a vagabond. All this and much more we gathered from his conversation. He knew the note of every bird, the name of every flower; and his love for the woods, for everything that is wild and free, was intense and ungovernable and beyond even his own comprehension.

After a moment of strange silence—strange, indeed, following so closely upon the heels of his volubility—he said:

"Would madame and monsieur object to a song, a little English ballad?"

Not at all. On the contrary, "madame" and "monsieur" had been anxious to hear him sing. Whereupon this ragged outcast, measuring effects with the eye of an artist, took up his stand somewhere between the piazza and the gate and, leaning upon his rough staff, sang the old, old song of "Katie Darling." I despair of describing to you the voice of this

man. I might say it was plaintively tender and sweet. I might say it was unsurpassed in volume and compass. I might say it was exquisitely flexible. But how poor these comparisons appear when I recall the effect of the song! There was some occult quality of tone and expression subtle enough to escape all analysis, sweet enough to suggest tears rather than criticism. I have heard many famous singers, but never one who sang like Antoine Cadoret. Two lovers upon an adjoining piazza, who had amused us by their silly giggling, instinctively clasped hands and listened. A cripple hobbling upon his crutches paused as the wonderful voice fell upon his ear. A courtesan, trailing her scarlet robes of sin on the other side of the street, stopped to listen and then passed into the darkness weeping. Something not in the song, but in the quality of the voice, suggested all that was beautiful in life and desirable in death.

The visions of youth and hope were summoned to life again. Ah! had you been there, gentle reader, the ghost of your dead lover would have arisen from the grave of the past pale and patient and tender. Your youth would have stood before you in all the freshness and purity of the olden days. The romance that the cares of business have long since banished from your memory would have confronted you with outstretched hands and appealing eyes. In the gathering dusk the dear girl who died so many years ago, the little child for whom you mourned so long, the mother who long since passed from death unto life, the wife who was so patient and forgiving, the friend who was so brave and forbearing would all have clustered around you, summoned from the past by the magic of Antoine Cadoret.

But the song came to an end, and the singer went on his way.

"May the good God bless you, madame, and your husband and the little children! I shall keep you in my heart."

So, with a bow which was very perfection of grace, Antoine Cadoret, the tramp, passed out of the gate and went up the street, humming

*"Quand les cloches du soir."*

And it happened, as he passed out of view, that the evening bells were ringing. A vote was taken, the result of which

was received with loud applause by the "madame" and the babies. We voted unanimously: "Good luck to Antoine Cadoret."

Long before this he is well on his way to Canada. He has passed into the green depths and through the dappled shadows of many an inviting forest; and many a love-lorn maiden, I wot, leaning from her window, has dropped her fair face upon her bosom and wept at the voice of this most musical vagabond, wafted to her in all its tender sweetness upon the odorous winds of spring.

J. C. H.

### *PROEMIAL TO PUTNAM<sup>1</sup>*

BEING THE RETURN OF A YOUNG MAN TO THE HALLS OF HIS FATHERS

The Big Yellow Cat and the Fat Baby—An Hour's Lecture from a Live Colonel and a Sudden Dive Deep Down into His Memory.

The old proverb says that chickens always come home to roost; and, stirred by the same instinct, I make frequent visits to Putnam County. Putnam, it must be remembered, has produced some rather famous people. The Lamars, including Mirabeau and L. Q. C., first saw the light within its borders. So did the Meriwethers. So did the Bledsoes. So did the Branhams. So did William H. and Garrett Sparks. So did Colonel Tom Hardeman, of Macon. And so did a great many other notable people. It is a little curious, too, that those who were born among the old red hills of Putnam develop, once a year, as regularly as the seasons come and go, an intolerable desire to return and wander aimlessly and pleasantly among the people and the scenes they knew of yore. This desire has developed into an instinct with me, and scarcely a season passes that I do not return to get a whiff of the dust that the breezes of spring wantonly set afloat.

A little while ago I concluded to make a visit to the neighborhood where, for a few months during his early career, the late Secretary Seward brandished the birch of the country schoolmaster. A few years ago I was perfectly familiar with everybody and everything in that section. But time brings about many changes—changes the character and ex-

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<sup>1</sup>Compare "Seward's Georgia Sweetheart," page 201.

tent of which it is impossible to anticipate. The fields had taken new shapes. The public road made strange and puzzling detours. The very air seemed different. There is something pathetic in the eagerness with which one who has been long absent from his home strives to recognize old landmarks and to locate familiar places. Once upon a time—ah! that happy, happy time!—I knew every feature of the landscape in that beloved land. The trees nodded to me as one friend nods to another. The tall corn waved its soft salutations. The ground squirrel, as swift as a beam of light, paused on the lower rail of the fence and winked at me in no unwelcome mood. And even Dick Griffin's brindle cur, noted for his fierceness, would cease to bay and tug at his chain.

But, alas! all this was changed. Unfamiliar growths of pine met my eye on every side. Whole forests had disappeared. Negro cabins, as plentiful and seemingly as unsubstantial as mushrooms, dotted the land. The ground squirrel flitted along the fence like a shadow and suddenly dived into a hole, where, no doubt, filled with fear and apprehension, he told his little family of the advent of a stranger. Even the little village of Rockville was changed. New clearings had been made, two stores had been built, an additional saloon had put in an appearance, and various other improvements had been made—at least they were called improvements—but, to my mind, the little place would have improved by remaining as it was.

About two miles northeast of Rockville is a settlement known throughout the country as Turnwold. It was here that the first, last, and only country newspaper was ever printed, and it was here that William H. Seward figured for a brief period as a Georgia schoolmaster. It was dark and raining when I arrived at Turnwold, and I made bold to ride for the first light I saw. The sound of my horse's hoofs aroused the kennel, which is attached to every country establishment, and I pretty soon discovered that the beacon which had been my guide streamed from the window of a substantial and comfortable-looking farmhouse. I finally succeeded in making myself heard; and a man, whose voice sounded cheery enough through the mist and the drizzle, came to the door,



"Kin we take you in? Well, I reckon we kin, ef thar ain't more'n a dozen un you, an' ef you're right shore you ain't no inshorence agent ner no sowin' machine man ner yit a book peddler."

I promptly disavowed any connection whatever with these light but lucrative occupations; and the farmer, with that bluff hospitality characteristic of his class, responded:

"All a-settin', 'squire. You don't talk glib enough fer one o' them fellers. I reckon you better light whilst I chunk off them cussed dogs. They git right nasty w'en they snuff a stranger. They come ding nigh chawin' up a pianner chuner las' week. He scuffled like a grown man an' squalled like a sixteen-year-old gal with a green lizard down her back."

I had known mine host of old, but I waited before making myself known, to see if he wouldn't recognize me.

"Jes' walk right in, 'squire, while I get your creetur in out o' the wet."

It was an exceedingly pleasant home to which my hospitable friend thus informally introduced me. Upon every side the evidences of comfort and happiness, of honest industry and hearty enjoyment were abundant. Upon everything, from the large yellow cat purring softly and sleepily by the hearthside to the spinning wheel in the corner, the peace and repose of content seemed to have settled. The matronly-looking wife, with her pleasant smile, and the daughter, with her graceful form, black eyes, and beautiful hair, who might have sat for a picture of Bret Harte's "Miggles," together with the abnormally fat and exceedingly cheerful baby, formed an interesting group. And then there was an affable and dignified old gentleman whom the ladies called "Colonel."

Suddenly, while I was playing with the fat baby and mentally calculating how many pounds of sausage he would make if carefully ground up, the young girl with the beautiful hair gave a smothered scream.

"Why, law, ma!" and then she rushed to the door. "Pap, O pap, come here!"

"Pap," thus summarily summoned, not responding, the girl bounced out into the mist and rain and in a few minutes returned with "pap" in tow. She had recognized me,

and mine host came back with the most hospitable imprecations upon his lips.

"Well, dog on my cats! Ef this don't beat the Jews! A-runnin' up on me out thar in the dark an' never sayin' who's who. Well, dang my buttons!" after shaking my hand with a heartiness that one never meets with in cities. "How you have come out! Ain't he growed, mother? He used to be slim ez a tapeworm. Well, ding my hide!"

Everybody joined in the enthusiasm that is so grateful to those who fear they have been forgotten. Even the baby cooed and laughed in a manner which the mother said was quite unusual even for so precocious an infant. They were all enthusiastic but the "Colonel." He merely rubbed his venerable forehead with the end of his walking cane and gazed abstractedly into the fire. It was apparent enough that my advent had interrupted the Colonel's statement of some theory of religion or politics, for no sooner had comparative quiet been restored than he turned to me and remarked in the tone of one suddenly resuming a suspended argument:

"We must have sistim, sir—sistim in guvunment an' sistim in farmin'. Thar's got to be a change. We can't go on at this rate, sir. We've got to move up nigher to economy. We've got to fetch things back whar they started frum. Sistim is the thing. Why, sir, ef it wuzent fur sistim in natur', the intire whatshi name would drap back into the origernel whatyoumaycallem."

I readily assented to his somewhat dubious proposition; and the Colonel, thinking he had found a fresh recruit, proceeded to talk in the same strain for an hour or more. I finally found an opportunity to have some conversation on a subject of my own choosing.

"Colonel, did you ever know a man named Seward, who once taught school in this neighborhood?"

"When might that have been?" asked the Colonel somewhat cautiously.

"About the year 1819."

"Seward, S-e-w-a-r-d," said the Colonel, reflectively rubbing his cane against his forehead. "Lemme see. There was Pute Seward, that used to live on the Billy Walker place; but he was drowned at Armor's Ferry."

"Thar was Buck Seward," suggested mine host.

"He looked like keepin' school," said the Colonel derisively. "He couldn't keep hisself. Babe Folsom put *his* light out at Harmony Grove. No," continued the Colonel, "I disremember any sich man."

And yet, notwithstanding that the Colonel failed to remember the fact, the late Secretary Seward taught school within three-quarters of a mile of where we were then sitting, nearly sixty years ago. Or, to be more exact, on the 2d of March, 1819, the following advertisement appeared in the columns of the *Milledgeville Journal*:

"UNION ACADEMY.—The friends of science are respectfully informed that a private academy has lately been established in the neighborhood of Major William Alexander, Mr. William Ward, and Colonel William E. Adams, in Putnam County, on a site obtained from Francis Ward, Esq., not far from Garner's Ferry, and will go into operation on the 19th of April. The academy edifice, which will be ready for the reception of students by that day, will be spacious and commodious, adapted to the accommodation of eighty to one hundred scholars in two schools. The rector, Mr. William H. Seward, is late from Union College, New York, from which institution he comes highly recommended as a young gentleman of good moral character and distinguished industry and literary acquirements. He will teach the Latin and Greek languages, theoretical and practical Mathematics, Logic, Rhetoric, Nature and Moral Philosophy, Chemistry, Geography, English Grammar, and such other branches as are usually taught in Northern colleges. The common branches of education—spelling, reading, writing, etc.—will, of course, be taught in this institution. The price of instruction will be \$15, \$22, or \$30, according to the branches taught. Board may be had in respectable families at a sum not exceeding \$125. From the respectability and acknowledged heartiness of the neighborhood, the cheapness of board and tuition, and the qualifications of the rector, the trustees feel warranted in recommending this infant establishment to the attention of the public. Persons disposed to send their children will enter them without delay with the Treasurer, Major William Alexander, designating the stud-

ies they wish them to pursue, in order that the requisite aid may be procured for Mr. Seward; it being understood also that if any students are excluded for the want of room they must be from among those last entered. Communications directed through the medium of the post office in Eatonton to William H. Seward, Rector of Union Academy, or to William Turner, Secretary, or to William Alexander, Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of Union Academy, the postage being duly paid, will receive prompt attention. By order of the trustees. *WILLIAM TURNER, Secretary.*"

The tradition is that Seward, who was at that time a young graduate, had some misunderstanding with his father which led him to abandon the paternal roof-tree and drift southward. He came highly recommended and was at once employed by the trustees of Union Academy at a salary of about eight hundred dollars a year. Union Academy was one of the first institutions of the kind established in Georgia and, during the short time that Seward officiated as its principal, was one of the best and most popular. It opened on the 19th of April with sixty-five pupils, and a month later the number had increased to more than seventy.

Seward's experience as a Georgia schoolmaster was very short. After he had taken charge of the school and seemed securely settled in the quiet little neighborhood, it is said that he wrote to his father informing him of his whereabouts. Pretty soon thereafter a Mr. Philo D. Woodruff was sent out by the elder Seward to fill the place of his son as teacher. Woodruff, to refer to him briefly here, finally settled in Greensboro; and when Seward came south years afterwards as ex-Governor of New York, he found his friend Philo married and settled, and he spoke of him as "fat, uncouth, and prosperous."

This, however, by the way. Whatever difference existed between the Sewards, father and son, was amicably settled; for within a very few months Woodruff was installed as the principal of Union Academy, the trustees relieving Seward from the obligation of his contract.

Great changes have taken place in Turnwold since Seward's rectorship of Union Academy. The trustees have all passed away. The dwelling house and plantation of Major

William Alexander, the father of Colonel P. W. Alexander, was purchased by William Turner and was for many years before and during the war the residence of the late Joseph A. Turner, a publicist of large local reputation, who during the war edited and printed upon his plantation that unique little publication, *The Countryman*.

The site of Union Academy was in the midst of a wood, about three hundred yards from the public road and near a clear, cool spring. A few years ago a little mound of earth, a few crumbling bricks, and a decaying sill showed where the building had stood; but now even these signs have disappeared. When I visited the place the other day, accompanied by my cheery host, an unseasonable mocking bird was singing in an acacia near where the schoolhouse had stood, but a flame-colored oriole flitted uneasily among the green leaves of an oak tree. My farmer friend readily remembered the local tradition that "Bill" Seward, as he called him, had taught in the neighborhood.

"Ross Adams used to go to school to Seward," said he, "and some of the Terrells, I reckon. Seward wuz one o' the Abolitionist kind, wuzn't he?"

"Slightly on that line."

"Yes, durn him! Him an' his kind fotch on the war. It would 'a' bin a mighty good move to 'a' chained him down here w'en we had him."

In 1846 Mr. Seward visited the neighborhood where he had once officiated as the principal of Union Academy and called upon Major Alexander, in whose hospitable house he had made his home. The conversation that ensued has been, in part, preserved among the records of William Turner, who, as has been stated, was the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Academy. Seward was accompanied by Woodruff; and when they visited Major Alexander, Woodruff asked:

"Don't you know this man, Major?"

"I do not," said Major Alexander.

"But you do know him well. You have seen him often before."

"I can't make him out."

"This is Ex-Governor Seward, of New York, who once taught school here and boarded with you."

"It is impossible."

"Well, it is Seward, certain."

"Well, it may be; but if it is Seward, his head is not half so red as it used to be. Come in, Mr. Seward. How do you do? I am glad to see you."

And this was the last that Georgia saw of Seward.

J. C. H.

### ONE MAN'S HISTORY

#### THE STORY OF A MAN NAMED JONES

The Faithfulness of a Fair Woman—Uncle Davy Roach's Comments  
—How Judge Clements Lost a Son-in-Law—A Letter from "Jeb"  
Stuart.

#### I

Having occasion recently to hunt through the files of the *Rockville Record and Vindicator*, which had been faithfully kept by the ordinary of the county, my eye fell upon two very curious items in the columns of that exceedingly able journal. Why these items should attract the attention of one who was merely searching for an advertisement is more than I can say, but I append them not only as explanatory of the facts that afterwards came to my knowledge, but as specimens of vigorous English. The first extract is from the paper dated May 18, 1854, and is as follows:

"Our young friend John Jones, who has been for several years superintending the large planting interests of Judge Horatio Clements, suddenly disappeared on Sunday of last week and has not been heard of since. There are various rumors afloat in regard to this mystifying occurrence, some of which go so far as to charge him with forging the name of the distinguished gentleman in whose employ he has been for several years."

The next extract is from the paper bearing date of June 1, 1854:

"We were much pleased on Thursday last to receive a visit from our distinguished fellow citizen, Judge Horatio Clements, and his charming daughter, Miss Mary Clements, who came to investigate the mysteries of 'the art preserva-

tive.' It is, indeed, encouraging to the weary editor when beauty condescends to smile upon his labors.

"In this connection it gives us pleasure to state that the rumors recently circulated to the effect that our young friend John Jones had forged the name of Judge Clements are utterly unfounded. The Judge says he never knew a nobler or a truer man, and we ourselves unhesitatingly bear witness to the fact. Thus far, however, nothing has been heard of Mr. Jones."

As I have said, I cannot explain why these paragraphs should have attracted my attention, nor do I care to explain it. The fact itself is sufficient. I read them aloud to the ordinary, a fat, bald-headed, commonplace sort of person.

"Do you know Judge Clements?" I asked.

"I ought to. I married his daughter."

"Your wife, then, is the Miss Mary alluded to here?"

"No. I married her sister."

"Was Jones ever heard from?"

"O yes. Years afterwards I heard from Jones."

"Why did he go away so suddenly?"

"I'll tell you what," said the ordinary with sudden animation, "if you'll go up and take dinner with me, I'll give you Jones's history. It's curious, very curious."

Of course I accepted the ordinary's invitation. Free lunches are acceptable enough to newspaper men, but when it comes to a whole dinner it amounts to something like a treat. I went, enjoyed the ordinary's hospitality, met his wife, a faded little blonde, and was introduced to Miss Mary, who even at the age of forty was one of the most remarkably beautiful women I have ever seen. I use the word "beautiful" because no other adequate description occurs to me now. She was not beautiful as beauty goes nowadays, but she possessed that charm of manner and of expression that far surpasses all beauty, and her eyes reminded me of those I have seen in portraits which follow you with sad inquisitiveness wherever you go and haunt you for years and years afterwards. That afternoon the ordinary, sitting on his verandah and lazily drawing consolation from a clay pipe, solved for me the mystery of Jones's disappearance.

I shall not attempt to tell the story in the words of the

ordinary. He took a practical view of the matter totally at variance with the facts in the case.

John Jones was a native of Virginia. He came to Georgia when quite a boy, attracted the notice of Judge Clements, was employed by him, and finally was promoted to the position of superintendent of the Judge's two plantations, which joined each other. The Judge, like Jephthah, had a daughter whom he loved passing well. She had studied in Baltimore, New York, and in Europe, and she returned shortly after Jones had been made the confidential adviser of the Judge and the superintendent of his affairs. I have been shown a photograph of Jones, or, rather I should say, an ambrotype (how these old-fashioned things confuse one!); and although it was somewhat faded, it gave a fair representation of the man at the time of his disappearance. There was nothing remarkable about the face except its firmness. The singular mildness of the blue eyes was relieved by the square chin, and there was something in the pose of the picture that gave unmistakable evidence of strength of will and unconquerable pride.

If I were writing you a story, I might go on and elaborate these things, as is the custom of those who give themselves over to the fascinations of fiction; but as I am writing of that which is known to hundreds who read the *Constitution*, I prefer to confine myself to a prosy narration of facts, but at the same time I propose to narrate these facts in my own way.

## II

One day it was given out that Miss Mary was to return, and orders were issued that the carriage should be ready the next morning to meet the train at Rockville. The Judge and his wife were to go, and there were a dozen neighbors ready to accompany them, all dying, as they said, to welcome Miss Mary. Jones did not join in the general enthusiasm. He remembered Miss Mary only as an awkward schoolgirl, who was always ready to tease and vex him, and who upon various occasions had made him painfully aware that his position was that of a hireling. He attributed these things to the thoughtlessness of youth and forgave them accordingly, but the remembrance of them



was not pleasant. Nevertheless, he would be glad to see her back. It would enliven the old place and probably add to the cheerfulness of his friend the Judge, who had been growing feeble and languid of late. He discovered, moreover, that he would have business in Rockville on the very day Miss Mary was to return, and long before the carriage was ready he had mounted his horse and gone. Strange as it may appear, when Jones arrived in Rockville, he suddenly became convinced that the business which carried him there could be as well transacted any other day, and this conviction made him restless, uneasy, and dissatisfied. His first impulse was to return to the plantation, but he did not follow; and it was an hour after the Clements carriage had rolled out of the village that he spurred his gray into a gallop and went clattering down the dusty road. In a half hour he caught sight of the lumbering vehicle creeping over the red hills. In a moment he had passed it, lifting his hat and bending low to the saddle as he did so.

"Who is that, papa?" asked Miss Mary as this athletic and sun-burned vision went by.

"That's John, our John," replied the Judge. "Don't you remember John Jones?"

"I think he might have stopped, if only for old acquaintance sake," responded Miss Mary.

"You must remember, Mary," said Mrs. Judge Clements, snapping her little black eyes and moistening her cold, thin lips, "that you are no longer a child. It would have been highly improper in Jones to have stopped, and he knows it."

"But, mother, he is one of us," said the Judge somewhat petulantly.

"He is among us, but not of us," responded the aristocratic old lady with some asperity.

The Judge remained silent, and Miss Mary, looking out of the window upon the waving fields of wheat and corn, allowed her thoughts to stray after the not unhandsome horseman who had just passed them. As for the horseman himself, he rode on with little thought of those in the carriage, and he was just about to urge his gray into a faster pace when he heard a noise from the direction of the car-

riage that caused him to turn in his saddle. He saw at a glance that there was some trouble and, without in the least abating the speed of his horse, wheeled and went back.

"What is the matter here?" he asked of the negro driver.

"I dunno, Mars John. Dis here off hoss has done gone an' tuk de studs ag'in."

"Did you strike him?"

"I gin 'im one or two right smart cuts, Mars John."

"You ought to have had them yourself," sharply and curtly. "Get down from there. Take my horse and go home."

Dismounting, Jones took the seat of the driver and, without even so much as a look at those who sat upon the inside, seized the reins and drove homeward. His voice, cheery, cool, and confident, acted like magic upon the obstinate horse, who promptly bent down to his work, and in a few minutes the carriage was spinning along at a rapid rate.

"He didn't use the whip once," said Miss Mary after they were all safe at home.

"He doesn't need to," replied the Judge with a considerable show of interest. "He is a wonderful man. There isn't a nigger on my place that wouldn't die for him. He never gets into a passion."

"He knows how to make his way," said Mrs. Judge Clements spitefully.

### III

I need not detain you with my detailed account of the history of John Jones. It is enough to know that he fell in love with Mary Clements and that this love was reciprocated. This strong man gave himself up entirely to the whims and caprices of the wayward girl. He was another being entirely. Always gentle and patient, he came to bring these qualities to rare perfection. But all this was to end. It soon became bruited about that John Jones was to marry Mary Clements, and then the gossips began their work. One day, and the last he ever saw of Rockville, Jones was in the post office waiting for the mail. He was sitting upon a sofa through which the springs displayed themselves

with painful distinctness, when suddenly two ladies came in—Mrs. Meriwether and Mrs. Ashurst.

"Did you hear the news about Mary Clements?" asked one.

"About her marriage?"

"Yes. They say she is about to disgrace herself and her family by marrying her father's overseer."

"Impossible!"

"That's what they say."

"Well, he can't be much of a man to drag a girl down like that."

"Hearing all this, Jones folded up the paper he had been reading, placed it carefully away in his pocket, and rode home. His mind was made up. He would bring no disgrace on the woman he loved. He had been foolish; he had been mistaken; he had committed an error. No woman claiming him as husband should ever say that he had disgraced her, least of all the fair, proud girl who in her queenly way had so often told him that she loved him. His duty was plain. In this mood he went home, and in this mood the next day he sought out the Judge. He was met in the hallway by the Judge's wife. She was brisk in her manners and brusque with her tongue.

"I have heard some strange rumors about you and Mary lately, John. The idea has somehow got abroad that you are to marry her. This is very embarrassing to us."

"It need not embarrass you, Mrs. Clements," with a smile which haunted the cold-blooded little woman for years afterwards. "There is nothing of it."

"O, I know that, John!" with an emphasis that must have cut the man to the quick. "I know that, of course, but the rumor is embarrassing because it is so absurd."

With this Jones passed into the library, where the Judge was poring over some political pamphlet, and Mrs. Judge Clements went her way. She knew well enough that her mission had been accomplished. Jones was slow to speak when he entered the presence of the Judge. He had known and loved the old man for years, and it was hard to part with him.

Jones walked to the library window and looked out upon

the lawn and the green fields beyond. It was hard, but it must be done; and so with great brevity and without even remotely hinting at the cause, he gave the Judge to understand that business of a peculiar kind would call him away for a few weeks.

"But you are coming back, John? We couldn't get along without you, you know."

"I cannot tell, sir. I am in deep trouble. I cannot tell."

It is useless to give the details of the conversation between Jones and Judge Clements. I have them only by hearsay. It is known, however, that when Jones came from the library he looked as though he had been weeping, and it was months and months before the Judge ever crossed his own threshold.

The old negro who held Jones's horse while he was talking with the Judge is probably the only person now living who could give any testimony as to his appearance and demeanor.

"I wuz holdin' un de hoss jess same like I hol' enny udder hoss," said the aged darcy to the writer hereof, "an' Mars John he come outen de big house lookin' like sumpin' wuz agwine ter happin, en shore 'nuff it did happen. He tuk his fiddle off'n de groun' whar I'd laid it an' called his dog outen de yard. Den he cotch me by de han' an' shuk it right hearty an' said: 'Tom, ole fellow, I'm gwine 'way. Look arter things while I'm gone.' He 'peared ter me, boss, like he wuz sorter dazed."

Strapping his violin case to the saddle, John Jones mounted his horse, spurred the spirited animal into a gallop, and henceforth those who had known him so well knew him only as a memory. He paused but once. Reaching the brow of a hill that overlooked the country for miles around, he turned and looked back. Upon the lawn he saw a fair young girl sauntering along swinging her straw hat, while waves of wind rippled over the ripening grain and swept through the rustling corn. A negro was singing in the fields below, and the melody, plaintive and suggestive, floated up to him. It was his last glimpse of all that he loved best. He turned his horse's head to the north. His dog, which had waited for him in the road, sprang forward with a joyous bark, and man and horse and dog plunged

into the cool, green depths of the wood. A little cloud of dust rising about the trees marked their course for a few moments, but even this frail vestige vanished before a passing breeze and with it the last trace of John Jones.

## IV

The following letter, a copy of which I have been permitted to make from the original, will explain itself. With the single exception that the man of whom I have been writing was not named Jones (and I may as well confess that all the names I have used are fictitious), the letter is a true and faithful copy:

*"My Dear Sir:* My duties have been such that I could not conveniently reply to your letter of inquiry at once. I knew Captain Jones long and intimately, both before and during the war. He has been with me in nearly all my campaigns, and a braver soldier or a more chivalrous gentleman never lived. He told me his history; and if you happen to be related to the lady whom he loved so dearly, you will tell her for me that his last thoughts were of her. I can sympathize with you most heartily. I have recently lost a dear little child, and it seems to me that I can more thoroughly appreciate the losses of others than ever before. Captain Jones fell while leading his comrades in a charge. He died the death of a young soldier.

"Yours sincerely,

J. E. B. STUART."

Miss Mary has turned her hand to works of charity, but it must be a pleasant experience to her to dream of her stalwart young lover as one who in the golden days of the Confederacy's immortal youth rode through the greenwood side by side with the prince of Southern cavaliers, perchance giving his sonorous voice to swell the volume of Stuart's favorite song:

"Sweet Evalina! Dear Evalina!  
My love for you will never, never die."

J. C. H.

A ROMANTIC RASCAL<sup>1</sup>

## THE STORY OF A BRILLIANT BOHEMIAN

Colonel Plimpton and His Contemporaries—The Experience of an Associate Editor—John Frazer's Two Visitors—A Twin Sister of Sorrow—The Life and Love of Jane Chichester—The Yellow Fever Plague of 1854 and the Horrors of the September Cyclone.

## I

On the night of the 11th of October, 1853, Mr. John Frazer, associate editor of the *Savannah Daily Pilot and Expositor*, sat in the sanctum of that prosperous and influential journal brewing a pot of coffee preparatory to indulging in a sumptuous lunch of bread and cheese and cold ham. To all appearances the hour was propitious, for Mr. Frazer was in a cheerful frame of mind. Forty years ago this very night, according to a well-remembered family tradition, he had been ushered into the world, and he was celebrating in this informal and inexpensive manner the anniversary of that important event.

What had not fortune done for him? Here he was in the prime of life, so to speak, married to the best woman the sun ever shone on, with four promising children and a comfortable salary of twenty dollars a week. He remembered, moreover, with a glow of pride as he gazed into the flickering grate that he was professionally associated with Col. Ajax Plimpton, the noted political writer and party leader. And in those days this fact implied a good deal.

Journalism in Savannah—indeed, throughout the country—was vastly different in 1853 from what it is now. Papers were valued as party organs rather than as vehicles of the latest news. It was preëminently the age of political discussion. Party feeling ran tumultuously high, and the choicest items of sensational news gave way before the transcendent importance of ponderous polemical essays on the state of the country. I grieve to say that in the specimens of this literature which have fallen under my observation serenity of expression, argumentative dignity, and equa-

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<sup>1</sup>Harris was associate editor of the *Savannah Morning News* from 1870 to 1876. See Part I.

nimity of treatment are not always perfectly maintained, and it is to be feared that in those days that paper was most popular with the reading men of all parties whose editor wielded the most ferociously personal pen and oftenest disregarded the amenities of the profession.

I regret that the limits of this brief chronicle will not justify me in quoting in full the short but sharp controversy between Major Bogardus, of the *Vade Mecum*, and Judge Fullalove, of the *Sentinel*, in which the former alluded to the latter as "the editor of a scurrilous and unprincipled organ, which, like a Hessian sutler, is always found following in the wake of those who carry off the spoils." The hostile meeting that followed, in which shotguns at ten paces were the weapons selected—the rendezvous at Screven's Ferry, where Major Bogardus chivalrously allowed his adversary the choice of position—and the final amicable and honorable adjustment of the whole matter upon the field, as well as the triumphant return of both parties to the city, are still so well remembered that I need do no more than to allude to them here.

The asperities of political journalism had even led Col. Ajax Plimpton to seek redress upon the field of honor, where, it is related, he cleverly winged his man. The Colonel was a prominent and influential citizen, and his paper, the *Pilot and Expositor*, deservedly ranked as one of the foremost and most efficient organs of the party of which he was a leader.

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Mr. Frazer was somewhat proud of his association with the Colonel. The fact, as I have said, implied a good deal more than would at first appear. But as Colonel Plimpton devoted himself exclusively to the political department, the duties of Mr. Frazer's position as news editor and local and marine reporter were arduous as well as responsible.

Sitting before the fire, Mr. Frazer, in the simplicity of his faithful and honest nature, remembered his responsibilities only as pleasures. He had just finished and sent in to the compositors a most elaborate account of the ceremonies attendant upon the laying of the corner stone of the monument to Count Pulaski. Not only had he given a graphic

description of the proceedings, but he had taken down an unusually full and interesting synopsis of the oration delivered upon the occasion; and he was satisfied in his own mind that he had gained a decided victory over his rivals of the *Sentinel* and *Vade Mecum*.

While thus engaged in brewing his coffee and indulging himself in the felicity of enjoying in advance the certain defeat of his brother reporters, Mr. Frazer suddenly heard the office door on Bay Street open and close again, and then the slow and unsteady step of some one ascending the stairway that led from the counting room to the editorial apartment. The professional mind of Mr. Frazer immediately led him to suspect that the person toiling up the stairs was a belated advertiser or, more probably, the vicegerent of a neighboring saloon armed with a bowl of steaming punch. If it was regular lemon stew now, Mr. Frazer thought it would be a fitting nectar with which to terminate the impromptu celebration of his natal day. At that moment the door of the sanctum swung widely open, and upon the threshold, swaying to and fro in the uncertain light, stood a rather handsome young man apparently in a hopeless state of intoxication. Gazing at him curiously a moment, Mr. Frazer was of the opinion that he had never enjoyed the pleasure of an introduction to his visitor, and this opinion was verified when he saluted the swaying figure in his usual hearty manner and received as his reply only one of those curiously solemn and comically vacuous stares begotten either of imbecility or of drunkenness. Mr. Frazer, however, was in a happy frame of mind and seemed resolved to ignore his visitor's apparent want of courtesy.

"O, come in, Doogans! You haven't forgotten a fellow, have you?" said he with a great affectation of familiarity and facetiousness. "Come in, will you, and rest yourself. Here is coffee and everything. I was expecting you, you know."

Still the unsteady figure swayed to and fro at the door and seemed to be uncertain whether to advance or to retire.

"O, come now, Doogans," continued Mr. Frazer with great apparent hilarity: "this won't do, you know. This isn't at all like you. This show of reserve doesn't sit well on you. You can't play off on me, you know. Bygones



must be bygones between *us*, old fellow. Let us hear from you at your earliest convenience."

Whether this unlooked-for show of warmth on the part of Mr. Frazer had any effect upon the untimely visitor, or whether it occurred to him to accept the invitation thus extended as the safest refuge from the police in his belated condition, it is impossible to say; but abjured in this strange and unexpected manner, strange and unexpected even to the muddled mind of an inebriate, the visitor, not without a faint show of embarrassment, staggered to the chair which Mr. Frazer's half humorous hospitality had placed for him and deposited himself therein in a state of limp helplessness truly wonderful to contemplate.

Mr. Frazer may have been somewhat nonplused at the result of his effusive hospitality, but he was by no means displeased. He was waiting to correct the proof sheets of his very vigorous account of the laying of the corner stone of the Pulaski monument, and he had been rather lonely, albeit his loneliness had not assumed the irksomeness of ennui. On the contrary, his thoughts had been of an exceedingly pleasant character. The world owed him nothing that it had not repaid with tenfold interest, and he had no occasion to chew the cud of bitter fancy. He simply felt that desire for companionship common to men of his genial and exuberant nature, and he looked down upon the inert mass of manhood before him with something very like a glow of satisfaction.

Here was an antidote to his loneliness. Here was a companion who would not interfere with his tempting basket of unopened exchanges. He was one whose tactiturnity seemed equal to most trying situations. Mr. Frazer rather rejoiced. There was something novel and refreshing in thus being brought in contact with a person in apparent good health who utterly refused to employ any diplomacy for the purpose of getting possession of the latest New York papers and who scorned to request that a paragraph personally hostile to Jones or Smith be inserted in the editorial columns of the *Pilot and Expositor*. It was a new experience to the associate editor, and it is to be feared that he gloated over it with a heathen enjoyment peculiar to himself.

Suddenly Mr. Frazer bethought him of his coffee, and he proceeded to "settle" it with that confidence in the result, and awkwardness in employing the means to bring it about, characteristic of men who attempt to imitate their wives. Taking the boiling beverage from the fire, he solemnly poured a small quantity in a cup and then poured it back, as he had seen Mrs. Frazer do thousands of times, all the while keeping up a running fire of conversation with the quiet individual whom he affected to regard as his guest. It soon became evident that Mr. Frazer's awkwardness was more apparent than real. The aroma of the coffee filled the room with its pleasant and tantalizing fragrance, and he at once set about arranging the preliminaries of his lunch.

"Another moment, Doogans," said Mr. Frazer, cutting his cheese into dainty little slices; "another moment, and you would have been too late. Promptness is the result of system, and system we must have. There's nothing like system, Doogans."

Here the office boy brought Mr. Frazer the proof slips for which he had been waiting.

"Thanks, Johnny. Ah! by the by, allow me to introduce you to our friend Doogans. You remember Doogans, of course."

Johnny retreated precipitately from the sanctum with a broad grin of embarrassment on his face and subsequently informed the foreman of the composing room that Mr. Frazer was "a-feedin' an' a-chaffin' some more o' them tramps." Whereupon the foreman, who was flourishing a very large and very wet sponge, leaned upon the imposing stone and remarked with sententious acerbity that "if everybody had as big a heart and sent in as clean copy as John Frazer there'd be a d—d sight less trouble in this world."

This and various other comments upon the peculiarities of Mr. Frazer's character did not reach the ears of that gentleman, and he went on preparing his lunch. He sliced his bread and cheese and then proceeded to adjust his coffee-pot in a position where the beverage would not grow cold.

"You see, Doogans," addressing in a half apologetic tone the person whom upon the spur of the moment he had thus facetiously christened, "it is business before pleasure with us. We are all more or less called upon to respond to the

stern demands of duty; and the more cheerfully it is done, the better for the producer as well as the consumer. That is political economy, Doogans. Owing to a previous engagement," flourishing the proof slips toward the voiceless figure, "I am compelled to postpone for a few moments the discussion of these viands."

With this Mr. Frazer complacently betook himself to reading the proofs of his account of the corner-stone ceremonial. The monotony attendant upon the satisfactory accomplishment of this professional duty was varied only by the quick scratching of Mr. Frazer's pencil as he fell upon some unlucky typographical blunder or swooped eagerly down upon some verbal inaccuracy. He had just reached a point in his excellent synopsis of the oration delivered upon the occasion where an eloquent comparison was made between the services of Lafayette and those of Count Kasimer Pulaski, when it suddenly occurred to his mind—oddly enough, as he remembered afterwards—that it would be a terrible thing if his boy Jack should ever come to the condition of the person who had that night strayed into the sanctum. Such an idea was too absurd to entertain; but if it *should* come to pass, he thought, his heart would be filled with undying gratitude to any one who would show his boy any kindness or consideration.

His mind thus unaccountably diverted from the task to which he had set himself, Mr. Frazer turned in his chair to take a closer look at the stranger. That individual was sitting in pretty much the same position he had at first assumed; but his hat had fallen off, and the light now shone directly in his face. Mr. Frazer, gazing with some interest at the drooping figure before him, thought he had never seen a finer face than that which was here passively upturned to the light. Beyond a faint flush upon the cheeks, there was no sign of intoxication, and the clear-cut, handsome features were marred by no tokens of dissipation. The complexion was fresh and fair, and the forehead high and intellectual. Mr. Frazer was a firm believer in physiognomy, and he at once concluded that his strange visitor, whatever might be his present condition and circumstances, had been born and bred a gentleman. Every feature, from the perfectly developed head to the small, symmetrical hands

and shapely feet, bore the unmistakable evidences of culture and refinement. There were slight, very slight streaks of gray in the stranger's closely curling hair, but to the good Samaritan sitting on the other side he appeared to be a man of perhaps thirty-two years of age.

When Mr. Frazer turned again to his work, the levity with which he had greeted his visitor had vanished; and as his pencil with trained facility picked out the various errors in the proof, his features settled into an expression of serious concern. It had been his intention to have the man carried to the pressroom, where upon the bundles of paper stored therein he might find more comfortable accommodations than the police barracks would afford; but on second thought he would let him remain in the editorial room. And so when Mr. Frazer had finished his proofs he set about making his guest comfortable. With some difficulty he lifted the limp body from the chair and half carried, half dragged it across the room to the sofa, whereon during the long, hot days of summer Col. Ajax Plimpton, the editor, was in the habit of resting from his arduous labors. Placing the helpless man in a comfortable position, Mr. Frazer carefully placed over him the shawl which he was in the habit of wearing and again subjected the calm and impressive outline of the stranger's features to a curious examination. Apparently this closer scrutiny satisfied him, for he turned from it with a little sigh of pity and commiseration.

Mr. Frazer's coffee was still smoking by the fire, and his economical lunch lay spread out upon his desk. These he attacked with a zest peculiar to the profession and with a fearlessness that spoke volumes for his powers of digestion. Having disposed of these things, Mr. Frazer buttoned his coat closely around his throat, turned off the gas, walked thoughtfully downstairs, and plunged into the cold, foggy air.

## II

The immemorial policeman, with whom Mr. Frazer had often endeavored to cultivate relations of a confidential character in the hope of ultimately coaxing a belated item from his inner consciousness, stood in his accustomed place

on the corner, a statuesque representation of eternal vigilance. Mr. Frazer intended to ply the policeman with the usual query, but just at that moment a woman, going at a rapid walk, turned the corner and jostled roughly against the somber official. Seeing what manner of man it was she had thus unintentionally disturbed, she stopped.

"By George," thought Mr. Frazer, "here's a lively item!"

But he was mistaken. Approaching the policeman near enough to place her hand—a pretty little hand, as Mr. Frazer could see—upon his damp, shaggy sleeve, in a supplicating manner she said, "Pray, sir, can you tell me where I may get lodging for the night?" a quaver born of fright and distress in her voice. "I have tried at all of the hotels, but what is one to do without money? O sir, if you could only tell me where I might get out of the streets! Have you no dear wife at home?"

It is to be feared that this appeal, delivered with all the nervous eloquence of despair, in no wise affected the morose-looking policeman; albeit there was nothing in the pale and worn features of the woman or in her shabby, genteel attire to excite his suspicion. With him the story was an old one with some variations; he had heard it hundreds of times. But before he could reply in the cynical style of his class Mr. Frazer stepped briskly up. "Madam," said he in a tone that suppressed the sarcastic smile of the otherwise austere official, "I have a wife at home, a wife and two darling little daughters. Will you come with me and see them?"

The woman turned toward the kindly voice and saw the genial, honest face of the journalist. "O sir!" said she and then fell to crying as if her heart would break. The staid policeman moved uneasily from one foot to the other and finally walked off a little way. He was evidently unused to such scenes. When he turned again, John Frazer, with the woman clinging to his arm and still weeping, was going up the street in the direction of his home. The policeman paused as he looked after them, and the small evidences of feeling called into life by the woman's tears changed suddenly to a stare of blank astonishment. To his practical mind this singular appeal for such a common

charity was, as he inelegantly but pungently expressed it, "a regular put-up job." To have thought otherwise would have been to seriously impair his own high estimation of his official integrity. Hadn't he seen trollops before?

"But for John Frazer, a family man, to be a-totin' of 'em around at this time o' night! Ding my hide to Jericho and back ag'in if I ever thought that of Frazer," said the worthy policeman. "It'll do mighty well for some o' them young fellows to hook on to them kind o' wimmen; but old Frazee, blamed if it don't head me!"

The idea that Mr. Frazer's purposes were wholly benevolent never once entered the cynical mind of the policeman, and the incongruous proceeding of the usually sedate newspaper man puzzled him to a degree. Thus mystified, the officer followed the fast-receding couple, and this is what he saw: He saw Mr. Frazer and his companion walking briskly through the fog and heard their voices as they passed up the lonely street. He saw them turn sharply to the right and pass through the shadows of one of the miniature parks, saw them emerge on the other side, and in a moment more heard them enter Mr. Frazer's house. Then the vigilant policeman saw no more; but he remained for a long time leaning against a live oak in the little park apparently lost in thought. The next day he detailed the circumstances to a few of his comrades, and when one of them made some coarse remark the narrator bristled up directly: "D—n it all, boys, can't nobody never do any good? Brash judgments won't hold water. The man better'n old Frazer ain't never been chiseled outen the original mud, in my opinion."

Perhaps the boys thus appealed to forebore to worry the oldest member of the force; but it is certain there was no more untimely joking, and thereafter when any of the men met Mr. Frazer they saluted him with grave deference.

### III

Mrs. Frazer had not retired when her husband came in. Even Jack, aged nine years, had made a feeble attempt to sit up until his father should come home. It was a restful, satisfying picture: the pleasant-looking matron with her baby in her arms, Jack at his mother's feet, his fair curls thrown into a confused mass and his fresh young face glow-

ing with health and strength, the little girls on the trundle-bed, the busy clock upon the mantel. Even the arrangement of the furniture, which was none of the finest, suggested repose. The sight of it had often repaid John Frazer for many a weary hour at his desk, and now as he crossed the threshold of his little kingdom he felt more than ever thankful that he was blessed with a home. It was Mr. Frazer's custom to wear a happy, smiling face within the precincts of his domiciliary domain; but to-night, instead of saluting his wife in his usual buoyant and hearty manner, he walked to the fireplace, leaned his elbow upon the mantel, and looked thoughtfully into the glowing grate. He did not know this strange woman waiting in the passage way, and yet what was he to do? He was certain she stood desperately in need of the commonest offices of charity, and yet suppose—

"Mattie," said Mr. Frazer finally, "I have brought home a poor woman whom I found wandering about in the streets."

Mrs. Frazer's look of surprise relapsed into one of thoughtfulness as her husband related the circumstances under which he had met the stranger; but when he had concluded, an amused smile crept into her motherly face. "Upon my word, John," with a little laugh, "there never was such a man." This expression had served her in more than one emergency. "I told Mrs. Bagley this afternoon that I wouldn't be at all surprised to see you bring a woman home some day."

Mr. Frazer was a little embarrassed as well as perplexed, but as his wife continued he caught a quiver of sympathy in her voice which he well understood.

"Is she *very* needy and forlorn, John?"

"Indeed she is, my dear; a woman for you to pity. Shall I ask her in here?"

"Of course, John. What else could you do?"

And so the strange woman was introduced into John Frazer's family circle. He had often confidently asserted to several of his more intimate acquaintances that his wife's judgment in regard to other women was unerring, and he narrowly watched her now, ready to abide by her decision;

but neither by word nor look nor sign did Mrs. Frazer intimate that she suspected either the calling or the character of the friendless woman thus fortuitously brought to her door. On the contrary, Mr. Frazer saw the expression of sympathy on his wife's face deepen into one of actual solicitude as her quick glance took in the pale, unattractive features, the drooping form, and frayed garments of the stranger. It was a pitiable sight indeed, and the Frazers often recalled it years afterwards.

As his wife bustled about the room in the warmth of her hospitality Mr. Frazer related with considerable dramatic power and a good deal of humorous exaggeration his adventure with the drunken man in the office of the *Pilot and Expositor*. The woman listened with an air of languid indifference until he came to describe the appearance of his comical visitor, when Mr. Frazer observed her listless air change to one of eager interest.

"I called him Doogans," the good-humored editor was saying, "for want of a better name. He is a young fellow, too, not more than thirty-two or three, I should judge. He wore a dark felt hat and a drab coat, and for all his drunkenness he is as handsome a vagabond as ever I laid eyes on."

Mr. Frazer paused and looked inquiringly at the woman.

"It is a pity," she said with a little sigh that seemed to dissipate every vestige of the eager expectation in her face.

But the cheerfulness of the Frazers was infectious. Jack had forsaken the floor for his father's lap; the baby, wide awake, cooed and laughed at the stranger, while the mother's face glowed with sympathetic happiness. Under this combination of genial influences the woman's reserve rapidly melted away.

"I haven't seen anything like this," said she finally with a curious smile of embarrassment, "since I was a girl." Then after a pause: "I think I will tell you who I am to-night."

And so sitting in that cozy little room, completely surrounded by the evidences of comfort and happiness, Jane Chichester told the story of her life as I shall not attempt to tell it. She was following her husband. She had fol-



lowed him around the world, from Virginia to New York, to San Francisco, to London, to Australia, to New Orleans, and now to Savannah. It was plain to her listeners that she had been wantonly deserted by the man she so faithfully loved, but throughout her narrative she never intimated such a thing. She had frequently endeavored to effect a reconciliation with her husband, but had always been met with cruel rebuffs; and yet in all she said there was a vague but strong hope that she might win him back. Her available means were exhausted, but this would be remedied as soon as she could communicate with her friends in Virginia.

Ah, how eloquently she described her weary journeyings in the wake of the erratic vagabond whom she called her husband! With what supreme patience she clung to her first love! And yet in the simple terseness of her story there was an underlying hint, an indefinable intimation, that she was endeavoring to hide even from herself the pathetic hopelessness of her wanderings. She spoke well and rapidly, but in the well-modulated tone of her voice there was an indescribable inflection of utter grief and sorrow that was more eloquent than her words.

It was wholly a new experience to Mr. Frazer, and for once, be it said, his professional mind did not recognize in the particulars of this poor woman's history the groundwork of a highly wrought sensational article for his paper. Such articles were uncommon in 1853, but they were by no means unknown. In the street or in the office Mr. Frazer would have unhesitatingly transferred the main points of the story he had just heard to the stray envelopes in his pockets; but sitting here, with the wan reality staring him in the face, he did not once remember the extraordinary disadvantage at which he had his rivals of the *Sentinel* and *Vade Mecum*. In thus relating the facts it may be that I have done unintentional injustice to the memory of John Frazer as a journalist; for, it is to be feared, the majority of modern reporters, reading this brief chronicle, will smile at the provincial simplicity and utter lack of enterprise that led a journalist at any period of the world's history to forego the pleasure of distancing his brother reporters. And yet so it is. The files of the *Pilot and Expositor* contain not the remotest allusion to the history of Jane Chichester.

It was decided that night that Mrs. Chichester should remain in Mr. Frazer's family until such time as she could hear from her friends in Virginia. In the meantime she would take charge of the education of the children and thus in some sort repay the kindness of this simple couple. She would always pray to the good God, she said, to bless the dear lady and gentleman who had saved her from the shame and misery of wandering through the streets.

"O, you cannot tell," she cried, with the tears running down her cheeks, "what a blessed thing your charity has been to me. If the prayers of a wretched and miserable woman can avail anything, you two will be happy all the days of your life."

In these days perhaps this would be a very small thing to say, but in the primeval times of '53, look you, it fell upon the ears of the Frazers with all the unction and fervor of a benediction.

#### IV

Mr. Frazer arose early enough the next morning to discover that Mrs. Chichester had already succeeded in attracting the children. The half-frightened woman of the night before had somehow been transformed into a grave, self-possessed, gracefully gentle lady, who, save when talking to Jack or the little girls, showed just the least shadow of reserve. There was nothing attractive about her face, Mr. Frazer observed, except a certain indescribable air of suffering which seemed to defy analysis. She had large gray eyes, pale cheeks, and features generally commonplace. Her one attraction was the presence of some rare occult quality in the tone of her voice, pleasing and yet baffling.

Mr. Frazer dispatched his breakfast with little ceremony. He was anxious to reach his office, ostensibly for the purpose of getting through with some extra work, but really to see whether his eccentric guest of the night before had carried off anything valuable. He regretted leaving the stranger where he might have free access to the counting-room, and now he was anxious to see the result of what he considered his ill-advised hospitality.

Reaching the office, Mr. Frazer found the bookkeeper there before him. Did he see anything of a strange man

this morning? Yes, he did. A stranger came downstairs an hour ago, inquired the name of the night editor, and went hurriedly out. Was there anything missing? Nothing whatever. Mr. Frazer experienced a feeling of relief. The fact that the stranger had generously refrained from robbing the office was very gratifying. It was a token, or so it appeared to Mr. Frazer, that his kindness had not been forgotten nor his confidence misplaced.

In another hour the associate editor of the *Pilot and Expositor* was engaged in the pleasing professional pastime of reading the accounts of the laying of the corner stone of the Pulaski monument that appeared in the rival papers and mentally comparing them with his own report of the same ceremony, and it may well be supposed that this mental criticism on the part of Mr. Frazer was by no means disparaging to his own production. Indeed, I have taken the trouble to examine the articles in the *Sentinel* and *Vade Mecum* on the occasion referred to, and it is but simple justice to the memory of Mr. Frazer to say that his report is by all odds the best. Its style is florid, but not excessively so, and the descriptive portions are minute without being wearisome. Copious extracts, I am informed, were made from the article by the country press, and the most judicious of Mr. Frazer's friends were loud in their praises. It was, in fact, for many years quite a feather in his journalistic cap, and it ultimately became his custom to refer to the occasion as something of an epoch. "I think it was just before I beat them on the corner-stone business," he would say when endeavoring to fix a doubtful date, or "It was about the year I fixed the other papers on the Pulaski monument affair."

While Mr. Frazer was thus engaged in admiring his own work by comparison, a gentleman entered the sanctum; but so absorbed was the journalist in his enjoyment of the defeat of his rivals that he did not immediately raise his head. Visitors were common enough; indeed, they were too common, Mr. Frazer sometimes thought, and he rarely paid any attention to those who, under one pretext or another, invaded the sanctum. The visitor who had just entered, however, appeared by no means anxious to disturb Mr. Frazer. He stood for a moment as if waiting for that

gentleman to acknowledge his presence and then, hat in hand, walked over to a large bookcase and began what appeared to be an attentive examination of the newspaper files which had their receptacle therein. But he was not too deeply absorbed in this examination to present himself to Mr. Frazer when that gentleman, vaguely oppressed by the presence of a second person in the room, raised his head from a third perusal of his corner-stone report.

"Mr. Frazer, I suppose," said the visitor, stepping briskly forward and offering his hand. "We have met before, Mr. Frazer, but under circumstances not calculated, I fear, to commend me to your esteem."

Mr. Frazer, holding the man's hand, endeavored to remember when and where he had met this distinguished-looking stranger. The face was strangely familiar, and Mr. Frazer was upon the point of apologizing for his stupid memory when it occurred to him that the easy, polished gentleman standing before him, with a self-deprecating smile upon his handsome features, was identical with the eccentric inebriate of the night before. The associate editor was visibly embarrassed. In the simplicity of his honest heart he regretted that he had ever seen this elegant gentleman in a state of intoxication, and this regret was intensified by a fear on Mr. Frazer's part that his visitor was at that moment suffering all the pangs of self-humiliation and mortification. But it is to be feared that the simple-minded editor greatly overrated the sensitiveness of the stranger. Beyond a certain air of self-deprecation, there was nothing in his manner to justify the journalist's embarrassment. Mr. Frazer had a vague idea that this was the case, and the fact struck him unpleasantly.

"I dare say," continued the visitor, "you took me for a ruffian or something of that sort."

"No," said Mr. Frazer with an earnestness superinduced by his embarrassment. "No, I did not. To tell the truth, I was glad you dropped in."

"I was very stupid, was I not?" with a light, infectious laugh. "Well, I have come to apologize to you, Mr. Frazer, and to thank you for not turning me over to the tender mercies of the police; and I appreciate your kindness the more because you had no idea you were extending the hos-

pitality of your sanctum to a brother journalist. My name is Vincent Evelyn."

Mr. Frazer had often heard of Vincent Evelyn. He was known among newspaper men as one of the most brilliant publicists of the day and had been prominently connected with several of the leading periodicals of the country. His writings were picturesque and vivid rather than argumentative or solid, and he had the happy faculty, rare in those days, but common enough now, of treating the most commonplace subjects in an interesting manner. By a trick of the quill here or a quaint turn of expression there he could render piquant the stalest facts, and his style of paragraphing was sparkling and pungent.

Mr. Frazer was very glad to meet Mr. Evelyn, and it must be confessed that in the half hour's conversation which followed he entirely lost sight of the distressing peculiarity of his first interview with that gentleman. It was a new and pleasing experience to Mr. Frazer, this familiar contact with one who had seen the world in all its phases, and it is to be feared that the provincial editor was thoroughly fascinated by the charming manners and conversation of this elegant cosmopolitan, who talked as glibly as the brook runs.

A few hours had made a wonderful change in the personal appearance of Mr. Evelyn, and few would have recognized the stupefied man who blindly reeled across Mr. Frazer's sanctum the night before in the polished, well-bred gentleman who was now gracefully and easily discussing art and literature. If Mr. Evelyn was at all humiliated by the remembrance of last night's occurrence, he betrayed it in neither word nor look nor time, nor did it ruffle in the least his consummate self-possession. Only once did he allude to it, and then he explained that, having just landed from the ship *Ariel* and suffering with tertian ague, he had been induced to forego his scruples. "Liquor," he observed, "absolutely stupefies me; but you will find, should we come to be better acquainted, Mr. Frazer, that a thirst for it is not one of mine often infirmities."

At last Mr. Evelyn rose to go. "When would I be most likely to find Colonel Plimpton in?" he asked. "I have letters for him from some of his old editorial acquaintances."

Mr. Frazer explained that Colonel Plimpton had no regular office hours and that it would perhaps be as well for Mr. Evelyn to seek him out at his residence. Whereupon the man of letters drew forth a beautifully embossed notebook, carefully entered the street and number therein, murmured his thanks, and went swiftly down the stairs, leaving Mr. Frazer, if the truth must be told, in something of a flutter. He had been charmed and fascinated by Mr. Evelyn to a wonderful degree, and yet, now that he was left alone to coolly and critically remember all that had been said, he could not, for the life of him, seize upon anything particularly impressive or brilliant that his visitor had let fall in the course of his conversation. To be sure, Mr. Evelyn had taken occasion in the most delicate manner imaginable to feed the spark of vanity that lies smoldering in every true journalist's bosom; but this Mr. Frazer did not take into account. The particular quality that rendered Mr. Evelyn's conversation charming was so ethereally subtle as to wholly defy any attempt at analysis; and it was utterly impossible to remember wherein his remarks had been either original or striking. Months afterwards the worthy associate editor discovered that the impossibility of analyzing the fascination of Vincent Evelyn was not the only perplexing characteristic of that gentleman.

When Mr. Frazer went to tea that evening—he rarely dined at home—he found that Mrs. Chichester had already made herself an indispensable member of his small household.

"She is such a *perfect* lady," said Mrs. Frazer, "and so thoughtful. The children love her already; and as for baby—why, she can quiet baby with a word."

"She is better than a storybook," said Jack with boyish sententiousness. And, in truth, Jane Chichester deserved all that could be said in her favor. For the first time in years she found herself in a position where she might develop and display all the womanly qualities of her nature, where she might in some sort satisfy her continual longings for the home she had always lacked; and so without any ulterior object or design, she set herself to improve her opportunities. It was a new and attractive world for her, this little family circle, a pasture fair and boundless, wherein

her dwarfed affections might grow to that goodly height and breadth and strength for which nature had designed them—a place of refuge wherein her poor perturbed spirit might find rest and comfort, if not consolation.

Perhaps it is useless to burden this chronicle with the history of Jane Chichester subsequent to her arrival in Savannah. As she began, so she ended. If she still longed to follow the vagabond husband whom she loved with such deathly devotion, it was not apparent to those around her. She made friends of all with whom she came in contact. The Frazer children were passionately attached to her, and she in return devoted herself to them with all the patience of a mother. Under her gentle influence Jack lost much of the sullenness of temper and roughness of demeanor superinduced by the associations and hard discipline of Mr. McMannus's select school for boys, and all the children developed in a wonderful degree those qualities of heart and mind that usually lie dormant under the ferule of the pedagogue.

In the fatal year that followed Jane Chichester's arrival in Savannah, that year of pestilence and terror, her name was made memorable in hundreds of households. It was the year of the yellow fever plague, and in the homes of the rich or in the hearts of the poor, wherever the epidemic laid its grim hand, this lonely woman appeared as an angel of mercy. Strong men, made weak and querulous by the fearful disease, fretted for her presence and dropped into slumber beneath the soothing touch of her soft, cool fingers. Little children in the delirium of fever, over whom she leant in her manifold ministrations, looked up in her face and smiled and called her mother. There are men who still remember the quiet, unassuming woman who, unbidden and unannounced, her sad face shining with benign pity, dropped suddenly into stricken households, bringing with her comfort and consolation. It was fitting that she, the twin sister of sorrow, should sup with the mourners.

V

When Mr. Frazer returned to the office on the day after the interview with Mr. Vincent Evelyn, he found a note upon his desk from Col. Ajex Plimpton. The contents

thereof evidently surprised the associate editor, for after reading it hurriedly through he placed it again upon his desk and stared at it. Finally he took the letter and proceeded to read it aloud, as if by that process to convince himself that there was no delusion about the matter, and the information elicited was really calculated to startle Mr. Frazer. He was informed in Colonel Plimpton's most pompous style that Mr. Vincent Evelyn had been engaged to contribute political and literary articles to the columns of the *Pilot and Expositor* and to edit these departments. "This, however," wrote the Colonel, "will in no wise interfere with your duties. I feel that I require a respite from the onerous responsibilities of editing, and my young friend Evelyn brings strong indorsements of his capabilities from men whose professional opinions I regard as invaluable."

Colonel Plimpton, if the truth must be told, was rather jaded. Only a few mornings previous to Mr. Evelyn's visit his lovely daughter Arabella, who was thought by her friends to possess a decided literary turn, had severely criticized one of her father's leading editorials.

"Why, pa," exclaimed this pert and interesting young lady, "who ever heard of such a horrid thing? Why have you repeated the same idea three times in the same article? It is positively shocking!"

Now, although the Colonel informed his daughter that this was merely a cunning rhetorical device to give emphasis to his arguments and was eminently proper under the circumstances, he took up the paper when Miss Arabella had gone to look after her flowers and found that her criticism, however pertly expressed, was by no means unjust. And so when Mr. Evelyn presented himself, indorsed by journalists whom Colonel Plimpton knew and respected, he was at once given a position.

Mr. Frazer, ignorant of the motives that prompted his employer to engage the services of the person who had made his appearance under the circumstances so well calculated to lead to distrust, was more than astonished when, after a third reading, he had fully mastered the contents of Colonel Plimpton's note. He felt aggrieved, and yet he well knew that he had no real grounds of grievance. He felt sure of his own position; but there was something in



the sudden elevation of this stranger to the responsible position of political editor that did not run parallel with John Frazer's ideas of what was just and proper. Albeit, if there was the slightest shadow of professional envy or jealousy in his heart, it did not assume a tangible shape either then or afterwards. It was his custom to make the best of everything, and when he folded Colonel Plimpton's note he folded away with it the involuntary mental protest against his employer's apparent partiality for a stranger and looked hopefully forward to the pleasant days he would pass in the society of the genial and cultured cosmopolitan who was henceforth to manage the *Pilot and Expositor*.

And, indeed, they were pleasant days. The seasons surrounded themselves with plenty, and the skies were propitious. Colonel Plimpton's journal sprang into new life and prosperity. The interior papers were loud in their praises of the improved tone of the political editorials, and one of them, the *Macon Whig and Statesman*, an opposition organ, in a spirit of catholicism for which its editor was loudly applauded, said: "Colonel Plimpton, the veteran editor of the *Savannah Pilot and Expositor*, seems to have suddenly regained his old-time vigor and energy. While we deplore his political course as calculated to undermine the pillars that uphold our glorious temple of liberty, we cannot but bear testimony to the signal ability which he brings to the discussion of public questions."

No subject seemed too abstruse for Mr. Evelyn. He had the political history of the country at his fingers' ends; and while it is to be doubted whether he relied implicitly on the truth of his own conclusions, it cannot be denied that he discussed politics from Colonel Plimpton's standpoint with a fecundity of argument and partisan fervor rarely seen even in those days, and his style was felicity itself. Looking over the files of the *Expositor* and examining Mr. Evelyn's editorials with the dispassionate and critical eye of a historian, it is easy to discover that his arguments were merely brilliantly arranged sophistries—sharp, aggressive epigrammatic half-truths that are always attractive and satisfactory to superficial minds. His literary style, however, was perfection in its way. I doubt if his

contemporaries, engrossed as they were in the common-places of political campaigns, realized one-half of its beauties. Scholarly and classical, it ran through the dry, dull discussions incident to the journalism of those days a clear, rippling, sparkling stream, picturesque and refreshing.

To say that Colonel Plimpton was pleased with his new editor would inadequately convey an idea of the expression of triumph that sat upon the Jovian front of that gentleman. He felt that nothing short of downright genius could compel Major Bogardus, the editor of the *Vade Mecum* and the Colonel's deadliest political enemy, to admit, as he had done in private conversation, that the *Pilot and Expositor* was well and ably edited; howbeit the Major still alluded to the Colonel's paper in print as "the effete organ of a rapidly decaying faction." Under these circumstances it is not strange that Colonel Plimpton gradually left the entire management to Mr. Evelyn, contenting himself with an occasional suggestion. He preferred the ease and comfort of his mansion on Liberty Street to the confusion of the printing office on the bay.

The brilliant social reunions given by Colonel Plimpton about this time are still remembered in Savannah. His drawing-rooms were frequented by the most notable men and women of the day. Hostile politicians and rival society cliques met here on common ground and were glad of the opportunity. At these reunions Mr. Vincent Evelyn was always a welcome and not an infrequent guest; indeed, his presence was well-nigh indispensable. His remarkable powers of conversation and his versatile gifts as a musician gave a charm and a luster to these informal assemblies that they would otherwise have lacked.

Miss Arabella Plimpton, the charming young hostess, with a dim idea that caste should prevail in all good society, was disposed to treat her father's employee somewhat cavalierly upon his first appearance as her guest; but as this seemed to have no effect at all upon the quiet, well-bred hireling, who circulated among the distinguished people present with the cool, airy self-possession of one who had frequented the salons of Europe, she determined to try her unfledged powers of sarcasm. "O, Mr. Evelyn," said she,

"I have had quite an angry dispute about you. Some of my friends say you can't sing, and others say you won't if you can. I said you could and you would."

It is creditable to Miss Arabella's discernment to say that even before she had concluded her rapidly uttered remark she knew she would fail of her object, but she persisted all the same.

"Indeed, Miss Plimpton," responded Mr. Evelyn gravely, "I feel highly flattered to have furnished your friends a subject for discussion. You were right. In my poor way I do sometimes venture to sing; and if I can afford a moment's diversion by attempting a song, I shall be most happy to do so."

"I was sure of it," said Miss Arabella in her gayest tone, turning triumphantly to several young ladies. "What shall we sing, Mr. Evelyn? Something pastoral, for instance? O yes, do let it be something pastoral. Will you favor us with 'Annie Laurie'?"

"If Miss Plimpton will kindly play the accompaniment."

Surrounded by a bevy of simpering maidens, Miss Arabella began a showy prelude, while Vincent Evelyn, somewhat apart from the rest, leaned gracefully against a corner of the instrument and toyed with his watch guard in a grave and preoccupied manner. In another moment there arose upon the air a voice so marvelously clear and sweet, so unutterably thrilling and tender that those who heard it held their breaths to listen. Miss Plimpton and her young friends forgot their affectation. Gray-headed politicians and scheming matrons felt themselves lifted once more into the fair fields of love and romance as the song, redolent with passion and the dewy freshness of tears, smote upon the night, and a belated vagabond, ragged and poverty-pinched, crept into the shadows to listen.

Miss Plimpton was electrified; but when she arose from the piano, penitent and ready to apologize for her rudeness, Mr. Evelyn was discussing Voltaire with the pretty little wife of the French consul. Subsequently, however, when the company had dispersed, the charming Arabella apologized to her album. "I never shall forgive myself," she wrote, "for my actions to-night toward V. E. His voice is sweet enough to lead a chorus of cherubim." This was

a very pretty conceit and ought to have eased the conscience of the fair writer, but apparently it did not; for thereafter the servant who went to the office every morning for Colonel Plimpton's favorite exchanges invariably placed a bouquet of fragrant flowers upon Mr. Evelyn's desk. Perhaps this by no means unusual method of combining an apology with the most delicate flattery was grateful to that gentleman's sensitive soul. Perhaps his keen perception recognized in it an offering at a far more suggestive shrine. Howbeit, it is certain that he was thenceforth a frequent visitor in the household of Colonel Plimpton, and it was remarked that his visits were usually at an hour when Miss Arabella's leisure was unencumbered by other callers.

## VI

Thus the swift seasons passed. Autumn faded into winter, and winter blossomed into spring. John Frazer, performing his accustomed duties in the old matter-of-fact way, had no occasion to complain of the contingency that gave Mr. Evelyn editorial control of the *Pilot and Expositor*. He found in the young journalist the same genial and attractive qualities that had characterized him from the first. There was no jealousy on the part of Mr. Frazer and no shadow of affectation on the part of Mr. Evelyn, and the two men, so dissimilar in age and education, so diverse in thoughts and habits, became warm friends; albeit one or two little incidents occurring during the balmy spring that followed Mr. Evelyn's connection with the *Expositor* puzzled Mr. Frazer not a little.

Once when the latter gentleman had just put in shape a meager telegraphic marked report and was leaning back in his chair, dreamily admiring the handsome profile of his companion, who was standing at the window overlooking the bay, he was suddenly startled by a sharp exclamation of terror from Mr. Evelyn and saw him, pale and agitated, seize his hat and leave the room. Mr. Frazer thought some accident had happened on the street—a child run over by a dray, most probably—and as these occurrences were in his line, he lost no time in occupying the point of observation which Mr. Evelyn had just vacated. To his astonish-

ment, there was not a vehicle of any kind in sight. Bay Street lay sleeping in the ineffable calm of an afternoon in May, and the few pedestrians to be seen moved somnolently through the mild, sunny weather. On the opposite side of the thoroughfare Mr. Frazer recognized Mrs. Chichester walking slowly along, with Jack capering around her. Waving his hand at her by way of salute as she turned her head, he returned to his work. That night Mr. Evelyn was found at his desk as reticently drunk as on the occasion of his first appearance.

Another afternoon, somewhat later in the summer, after Mr. Frazer had been giving Mr. Evelyn some information respecting the yellow fever, which had made its appearance in the western portion of the city, the latter rose suddenly and began pacing the floor. "There are strange things in this world, Frazer," said he, stopping and placing his hand on that gentleman's shoulder, "some devilish strange things. Here is a paragraph I have just cut from a California paper," pulling a small slip from his vest pocket and reading it aloud: "Charles Clarence Chichester, the well-known literary vagabond, who figured on this coast several years ago, is said to be in Savannah, Ga. Charles Clarence Chichester always manages to keep about ten days ahead of his wife."

A sudden light dawned upon Mr. Frazer.

"I know Chichester well," continued Mr. Evelyn, "and I think he is a much better man than the person who wrote that paragraph. I know Chichester's history. Suppose, Frazer," in an eager tone—"I put it to you fairly—suppose you had married a woman and afterwards discovered that you had made a terrible mistake which, if persisted in, would make miserable her life and yours. What would you do?"

"I cannot conceive of such a contingency," said Mr. Frazer, the cold, clear tones of his voice contrasting strangely with those of his companion; "but it seems to me that a man of honor"—

"O, I know what you would say, Frazer," interrupted Mr. Evelyn with a slight gesture of impatience. "A man can preach glibly enough when he's safe in the pulpit; but put him in a back pew, and he's as dumb as any sinner of

them all. Good God!" with a sudden heat. "Human nature must have its own way sometimes. However," after a pause, "this man Chichester is nothing to me. I shall not fall into his mistake. I suppose you have heard, Frazer, that I am to be married to Miss Plimpton in the fall?"

Mr. Frazer looked at him in astonishment. "You?"

"Yes. Why not?" with a light, embarrassed laugh. "Do I look like a man who would make a choice of celibacy?"

Mr. Frazer did not reply. His thoughts were with the poor, patient little woman whom he had rescued from the streets and made a member of his household. It was all perfectly clear to him now. The mystery was solved, and yet so sudden and unexpected was the revelation that he found it necessary to take a turn in the fresh air before he could regain his wonted composure. In the meantime, with every desire to befriend Jane Chichester, he was not clear as to the course he ought to pursue.

## VII

Thus the hot days of June lapsed into the sultriness of July, and the yellow plague crept to its awful culmination. No one who survived that fearful summer of 1854 needs to be reminded of its ghastly characteristics. Fierce and blistering, the malignant sun beat upon the city during the day, withering vegetation and parching the dusty streets. During the night the foulest exhalations oozed from the pavements, and the walls of the houses were clammy with deadly dew. Miasmatic mists rose from the river and spread their dark, ominous wings above the smitten town.

Among the first to be stricken down and among the first to recover was Miss Arabella Plimpton. The hopefulness of youth and a naturally strong constitution did for her what the most skillful physician might fail to do. With death standing sentinel in every door and the desolation of grief wasting every household, the feverish summer drew to its close.

There had been no rain for several weeks, and the leaves of the trees hung crisp and lifeless, untouched by the faintest breath of wind. On the 7th of September, however, the profound calm was broken. A strong northeasterly gale sprang up, accompanied by a heavy fall of rain which

continued throughout the day. During the afternoon Mr. Evelyn entered the sanctum drenched to the skin and evidently under the influence of liquor. His actions were so peculiar that Mr. Frazer at once divined that his associate was in the delirium of fever, and so it proved. It was only after much difficulty that he could be induced to lie upon the sofa; but once there, he was as quiet as a little child, and it soon became apparent that the plague had already accomplished its terrible end, so far as Mr. Evelyn was concerned. The brilliancy faded from his eyes, and the flush died out of his face, and before Mr. Frazer could fetch a physician—before he could summon any assistance, in fact—Vincent Evelyn was dead.

All through that night the storm raged, culminating on the 8th in one of the most violent cyclones that ever swept over the South. It was a fearful experience to the stricken citizens of Savannah. Within they were confronted by the horrors of pestilence and death, without by the terrors of the hurricane. Thus with sudden and uncertain intervals of calm the dismal day wore to its close. In a room adjoining the sanctum, inclosed in a neat burial case furnished by Mr. Frazer, lay all that was earthly of Vincent Evelyn, and near by, with her head bowed down and her long black hair drenched and blown loose, sat Jane Chichester, faithful unto the last.

As the heavy dusk gathered in the west and slowly settled over the storm-smitten earth, Mr. Frazer heard a carriage drive to the office door. Then he heard the familiar voice of Col. Ajax Plimpton, and in a moment that gentleman entered the room, with his daughter clinging to his arm. He was quite broken down, Mr. Frazer saw, and his feeble attempts to assume the old pompous air were pitiful in the extreme. He cast his eye around the room with an eager look of inquiry: "How is he, Frazer? How is Evelyn? Dead? My God! It can't be! My darling, you must bear up."

The drooping figure at the Colonel's side seemed to shrink from the curt and cruel answer to her father's question, and she would have fallen had not Mr. Frazer held out to her his firm hand. Supported thus between these two men, one her father and the other her friend, she ap-

proached and gazed long and fondly upon the tranquil, passionless face of that other man who had been her lover. Upon the other side, motionless and unnoticed, crouched the pathetic figure of Jane Chichester, between whom and the fair young girl the coffin stood as a barrier. It is doubtful whether Miss Plimpton saw the forlorn woman sitting there; for after gazing with tearless grief upon the cold face of Vincent Evelyn, she kissed the fair, smooth brow and passed slowly out of the room.

As Colonel Plimpton turned away his eye caught the shining silver plate on the coffin. Adjusting his glasses, he bent over the memorial and with some difficulty made out the inscription thereon. It was this:

"CHARLES CLARENCE CHICHESTER,  
ÆTAT XXXIV."

"Frazer!" cried the Colonel in an excited tone, "there is some mistake here. They have sent you the wrong case. You had better have it changed at once." Mr. Frazer simply stood with his head bent and his eyes on the floor, and Colonel Plimpton, cautioning him again in regard to the mistake, passed down the stairway to the street, with his daughter on his arm.

Mr. Frazer retired to the editorial room and sat there thinking of the unfortunate woman who was watching with the dead. She should always have a home with him, mused the good Samaritan, and then his thoughts wandered off to Mattie and the little ones, who were safe in Middle Georgia.

Darkness gathered on the earth, and the wild storm hurled itself through the deep, gloomy caverns of night and tore a fresh pathway through the dull, wet skies. Once Mr. Frazer, with every faculty on the alert for some fresh disaster, thought he heard the trail of a wet dress upon the stairs. He arose at once and went into the room where the dead man lay, but Jane Chichester was gone. "Mrs. Chichester!" he called. "Jane! Jane!"

The echo of his voice chased itself through and through the deserted building. Once more he called and then ran down to the street and out in the furious, raging tempest. But Jane Chichester had vanished. It seemed as if the



storm, cruel and yet merciful, closing around the poor wanderer, had caught her up to its fierce, tumultuous, and yet pitiful bosom and so lifted her forever out of the forlornness and desolation of life.

J. C. H.

### UNCLE REMUS AS A REBEL<sup>1</sup>

HOW HE SAVED HIS YOUNG MASTER'S LIFE

(The Story as Told by Himself)

For several months old Uncle Remus has been in the country, raising, as he modestly expresses it, "a han'ful o' co'n an' a pillercase full o' cotton." He was in town yesterday with some chickens to sell, and after disposing of his poultry he called around to see us.

"Howdy, Uncle Remus."

"Po'ly, boss, po'ly. Dese here sudden coolnesses in de wedder makes de ole nigger feel like dere's sump'n outer gear in his bones. Hit sorter wakens up de roomatiz."

"How are crops, Uncle Remus?"

"O, craps is middlin'. Ole Master 'membered de ole nigger w'en he wuz 'stributin' de wedder. I ain't complain', boss. But I'm done wid farmin' arter dis; I is fer a fac'. De niggers don't gimme no peace. I can't res' fer um. Dey steal my shotes, an' dey steal my chickens. No longerin las' week I wuz bleedzd ter fling a han'ful uv squill shot inter a nigger what wuz runnin' off wid fo' pullets an' a rooster. I'm a-gwine ter drap farmin' sho. I'm gwine down inter ole Putmon County an' live alonger Marse Jeems."

"Somebody was telling me the other day, Uncle Remus, that you saved your young master's life during the war. How was that?"

"Well, I dunno, boss," with a grin that showed that he was both pleased and embarrassed. "I dunno, boss. Marse Jeems an' Miss Em'ly dey say I did."

"Tell me about it."

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<sup>1</sup>Compare "A Story of the War" in "Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings." In his Introduction Mr. Harris says this story is "almost literally true."

"You ain't got no time fer ter set dar an' hear de ole nigger run on wid 'is mouf, is you?"

"O, plenty of time."

"Boss, is you ever bin down in Putmon County?"

"Often."

"Den you know whar de Brad Slaughter place is?"

"Perfectly well."

"An' Harmony?"

"Yes."

"Well, hit wuz right 'long in dere whar Marse Jeems lived. W'en de war come 'long, he wuz livin' dere wid Ole Miss and Miss Sally. Ole Miss wuz his ma, an' Miss Sally wuz his sister. Marse Jeems wuz jes' eatchin' ter go off an' fight, but Ole Miss and Miss Sally dey tuk on so dat he couldn't git off de fus' year. Bimeby times 'gun ter git putty hot, an' Marse Jeems he up an' sed he jes' had ter go, an' go he did. He got a overseer for to look arter de place, an' he went an' j'ined de ahmy. An' he wuz a fighter, too, Marse Jeems wuz, one er de wus' kine. Ole Miss useter call me to de big house on Sundays an' read what de papers say 'bout Marse Jeems.

"Remus," sez she, 'here's w'at de papers say 'bout my baby'; an' den she'd go on an' read out twell she couldn't read fer cryin'.

"Hit went on dis way year in an' year out, an' dey wuz mighty lonesome times, boss, sho's you bo'n. De conscrip-tin' man come 'long one day, an' he jes' everlastin'ly scooped up dat overseer, an' den Ole Miss she sont arter me, an' she say: 'Remus, I ain't got nobody fer ter look arter de place but you.' An' I say: 'Mistis, you kin jes' 'pen' on de ole nigger.' I wuz ole den, boss, let alone what I is now. An' you better b'lieve I bossed dem han's. I had dem niggers up 'fo' day, an' de way dey did wuk wuz a caution. Dey had plenty bread an' meat an' good cloze ter w'ar, an' dey wuz de fatter niggers in de whole settlement.

"Bimeby one day Ole Miss she call me up an' tell me dat de Yankees done gone an' took Atlanty, and den present'y I hear dat dey wuz marchin' down to'rds Putmon, an' de fus' thing I knows Marse Jeems he rid up one day wid a whole company uv men. He jes' stop longer nuff fer ter change hosses an' snatch up a mouf'uf uv sump'n t' eat.

Ole Miss tole 'im dat I wuz kinder bossin' roun', an' he call me up an' say: 'Daddy'—all Ole Miss's chillun call me daddy—'Daddy,' he say, 'pears like dere's goin' ter be mighty rough times roun' here. De Yankees is done down ter Madison, an' 'twon't be many days befo' dey'll be all thu here. Hit ain't likely dat dey'll bodder mother er sis; but, daddy, ef de wus' comes ter de wus,' I 'spec' you ter take keer un 'em.'

"Den I say: 'You bin knowin' me a long time, ain't you, Marse Jeems?'

"'Sence I wuz a baby, daddy,' sez he.

"'Well, den, Marse Jeems,' sez I, 'you know'd 'twa'n' no use fer ter ax me ter look arter Ole Miss and Miss Sally.'

"Den de tears came in Marse Jeems's eyes, an' he squoze my han' an' jump on de filly I bin savin' fer 'im an' gallop off. I know'd by de way he talk an' de way he look dat dere wuz gwineter be sho'-'nuff trubble, an' so I begun fer ter put de house in order, as de Scripter sez. I got all de cattle an' de hosses togedder, an' I driv' 'em over to de fo'-mile place. I made a pen in de swamp, an' dar I put de hogs, an' I haul nine wagginloads uv co'n an' w'eat an' fodder to de crib on de fo'-mile place, an' den I groun' my ax.

"Bimeby one day there come de Yankees. Dey jes' swarmed all over keration. De woods wuz full un um, an' de road wuz full un um, an' de yard wuz full un um. I done heerd dey wuz comin' 'fore dey got in sight, an' I went to de well an' washed my face an' hands, an' den I went an' put on my Sunday cloze, an' by de time de Yankees hed arrove I wuz settin' in Ole Miss's room wid my ax 'tween my knees.

"Dem Yankees dey jes' ransacked de whole place, but dey didn't come in de house, an' Ole Miss she sed she hoped dey wouldn't, w'en jes' den we hear steps on de po'ch, an' here come two young fellows wid strops on dere shoulders an' s'ords draggin' on de flo' an' dere spurs rattlin'. I won't say I wuz skeerd, boss, 'cause I wuzent, but I had a mighty funny feelin' in de naberhood uv de gizzard.

"'Hello, ole man,' sez one. 'W'at you doin' in here?'

Ole Miss didn't turn her head, an' Miss Sally look straight at de fier.

"'Well, boss,' sez I, 'I bin cuttin' some wood for Ole Miss, an' I jes' stop fer ter wom my han's a little.'

"'Hit is cole, dat's a fac',' sez he. Den I got up en tuck my stan' behime Ole Miss and Miss Sally, a-leanin' on my ax. De udder feller he wuz stannin' over by de sidebode lookin' at de dishes an' de silver mugs an' pitchers. De man what wuz talkin' ter me he went up ter de fier an' lean over an' wom his han's. Fus' thing you know he raise up suddenlike an' say: 'W'at dat on yo' ax?' 'Dat's de fier shinin' on it,' sez I. 'I thought it wuz blood,' sez he. An' den he laft.

"But, boss, dat young feller wouldn't 'a' laft dat day ef he'd a-know'd how nigh unto eternity he wuz. Ef he'd jes' laid de weight uv his han' on Ole Miss or Miss Sally in dar dat day, boss, he'd 'a' never know'd w'at hit 'im er whar he was hit at, an' my onliest grief would 'a' bin de needcessity of sp'ilin' Old Miss's kyarpit. But dey didn't bodder nobody ner nuthin', an' dey bowed derself out like dey had real good breedin', dey did dat.

"'Well, de Yankees dey kep' passin' all de mornin', an' it 'peared ter me dat dere wuz a string uv 'em ten mile long; den they commence gittin' thinner an' thinner, sca'cer an' sca'cer, an' bimeby I hear skirmishin' goin' on, an' Ole Miss she say how it wuz Wheeler's Caverly a-followin' uv 'em up. I know'd dat ef Wheeler's boys wuz dat close I wuzen't doin' no good settin' roun' de house, so I jes' took Marse Jeems's rifle an' started out to look arter my stock. Hit wuz a mighty raw day, dat day wuz, an' de leaves on de groun' wuz wet, so dey didn't make no fuss; an' w'enever I heerd a Yankee ridin' by, I jes' stop in my tracks an' let 'im pass. I wuz a-stannin' dat way in de aidge uv de woods w'en all a sudden I see a little ring uv blue smoke bust outen de top uv a pine tree 'bout half a mile off, an' den 'fo' I could gedder up my idees here come de noise—bang! Dat pine, boss, wuz de biggest an' de highest on de plan-tash'n, an' dere wuzn't a lim' on it fer mighty nigh a hundred feet up, an' den dey all branched out an' made de top look sorter like a umberill.

"Sez I to myself: 'Honey, you er right on my route, an'

I'll see what kinder bird is a-roostin' in you.' W'ile I wuz a-talkin' de smoke bus' out again, an' den—bang! I jes' drap back inter de woods an' skearted roun' so's ter fetch de pine 'tween me an' de road. I slid up putty close ter de tree, an', boss, w'at you reckon I see?"

"I have no idea, Uncle Remus."

"Well, jes' sho' ez youer settin' dar lissenin' to de ole nigger dere wuz a live Yankee 'way up dar in dat pine, an' he had a spyglass, an' he wuz a-loadin' an' a-shootin' at de boys jes' as cool ez a cowcumber, an' he had his hoss tied out in de bushes, 'caze I heerd de creeter trompin' roun'. While I wuz a-watchin' un 'im I see 'im raise dat spyglass, look fru 'em a minnit, an' den put 'em down sudden an' fix hissef fer ter shoot. I sorter shifted roun' so I could see de road, an' I had putty good eyes in dem days too. I waited a minnit, an' den who should I see comin' down de road but Marse Jeems! I didn't see his face, but, boss, I know'd de filly dat I had raised fer 'im, an' she wuz a-prancin' an' dancin' like a schoolgal. I know'd dat man in de tree wuz gwineter shoot Marse Jeems ef he could, an' dat I couldn't stan'. I hed nussed dat boy in my arms many an' many a day, an' I hed toted 'im on my back, an' I l'arnt 'im how ter ride an' how ter swim an' how ter rastle, an' I couldn't b'ar de idee uv stannin' dere an' see dat man shoot 'im. I know'd dat de Yankees wuz gwineter free de niggers, 'caze Ole Miss done tole me so, an' I didn't want ter hurt dis man in de tree. But, boss, w'en I see him lay dat gun 'cross a lim' an' settle hissef back an' Marse Jeems goin' home ter Ole Miss an' Miss Sally, I disremembered all 'bout freedom, an' I jes' raise up wid de rifle I had an' let de man have all she had. His gun drapped down an' come mighty nigh shootin' de ole nigger w'en hit struck de ground. Marse Jeems he heered de racket an' rid over, an' w'en I tell 'im 'bout it you never seed a man take on so. He come mighty nigh cryin' over de ole nigger, I declar' ter grashus ef he didn't. An' Ole Miss—w'y Ole Miss fa'rly hugged me; an' w'en I see how glad dey wuz, my conshuns bin restin' easy ever sence."

"How about the soldier you killed?"

"We had ter cut down de tree fer ter bury 'im."

"How did he get up there?"

"W'y, boss, he had on a pa'r uv dese telegraf spurs, de kine w'at de fellers clime de poles wid."

"Your Marse Jeems must be very grateful."

"Lor', chile, dey ain't nuthin' Marse Jeems is got dat's too good fer me. Dat's w'at make me say w'at I do. I ain't gwineter be working 'roun' here 'mong dese chain gang niggers w'en I got a good home down yander in Putmon. Boss, can't you give de ole nigger a thrip fer to git 'im some soddy water wid."

And the faithful old darky went his way. J. C. H.

### THE OLD PLANTATION

The scourge that swept slavery into the deep sea of the past gave the deathblow to one of the peculiar outgrowths of that institution. The results that made slavery impossible blotted from the Southern social system the patriarchal—we had almost written feudal—establishment known as the old plantation. Nourished into life by slavery, it soon became one of the features of Southern civilization—a peculiar feature, indeed, and one which for many years exerted a powerful influence throughout the world. The genius of such men as Washington, Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Taney, Marshall, Calhoun, Stephens, Toombs, and all the greatest leaders of political thought and opinion from the days of the Revolution to the beginning of the Civil War, was the result and outgrowth of the civilization made possible by the old plantation. It was a cherished feature of Southern society, and it is not to be doubted that its demolition has been more deeply deplored by our people than all the other results of the war put together. The brave men and noble women who at the end found themselves confronting the dire confusion and desolation of an unsuccessful struggle have been compelled to set their faces toward the new future that is always ahead of the hopeful and true-hearted; but how many times have they turned and sighed, endeavoring to get a glimpse of the ruins of the old plantation! Now that the problem of slavery, which even before the desperate cast of the die in 1861 had begun to perplex the more thoughtful of the Southern people, is suc-

cessfully (but O how cruelly!) solved, even the bare suggestion of its reëstablishment is unsavory; but the memory of the old plantation will remain green and gracious forever.

What days they were, those days on the old plantation! How vividly you remember the slightest incident! How picturesque the panorama that passes before your mind's eye! There was the fox hunt planned for the especial benefit of Miss Carrie de Compton, the belle of Rockville. (If we should give the name of the town, you would abuse us for exposing you in the newspapers.) You remember lying in a state between dreaming and waking as Aunt Patience, fat and cheery—heaven rest the good old negro's soul!—comes into your room with much ado, bearing a steaming cup of coffee. Curiously enough, you recall almost her very words as she endeavors to arouse you to a contemplation of the necessities of such a momentous occasion as a fox hunt. "Well, I declar' ter grashus ef dat chile ain't layin' dar yit! Git outen dat bed dis minit! How you gwine ter ketch foxes under that bo'ister? Git up frum dar! Dat young gal done bin up too long ter talk 'bout!" You remember what an impression the fair Carrie made upon you in her trim riding habit, and how, when with one dainty hand holding the folds of her skirt she stooped to caress your favorite hound Flora, you lost your heart utterly. It is all indelibly impressed upon your memory—the ride to Sir Reynard's range, the casting about of the hounds, the sudden burst of canine melody as the fox gets up right in the midst of the pack, the hard ride at the heels of the hounds for a few moments, and then the sudden inspiration on your part that it would be well to guide the fair De Compton to a point near which the fox (an old customer of yours) would surely pass. You remember how you vainly endeavored to convince your skeptical charge that the slight, dark shadow stealing across the hillside not a quarter of a mile away was the veritable fox the dogs were after, how your whole frame tingled with delight when the soul-stirring music of the hounds was borne to your ears on the crisp breeze of morning, and what a thrill came over you as the pack burst into view, running with

heads up and tails down, your Flora far to the front and flying like a meteor.

What nights were the nights on the old plantation! The mellow light of the harvest moon crept through the rustling leaves of the tall oaks, fell softly upon the open space beyond, and bathed the brown old barn in a flood of golden glory, while the songs of the negroes at the corn pile, lusty chorus and plaintive refrain, shook the silence until it broke upon the air in far-reaching waves of melody. But, alas! all these are gone. The moon pursues her pathway as serenely as of old, but she no longer looks down upon the scenes that were familiar to your youth. The old homestead and the barn are given up to decay, and the songs of the negroes have been hushed into silence by the necessities of a new dispensation. The old plantation itself is gone. It has passed away, but the hand of time, inexorable and yet tender, has woven about it the sweet suggestions of poetry and romance, memorials that neither death nor decay can destroy.

### *A GEORGIA FOX HUNT*

HOW REYNARD WAS RUN TO EARTH IN THE OLDEN TIME

"Something Light for Sunday"—How the Editorial Presence Got Its Foot in It—Tom Tunison and the Fair De Compton

#### I

If the public ever deserved to be apologized to, they deserve it now, and the mischief of it is the whole affair is the result of such a curious and unexpected combination of circumstances as to make an apology exceedingly awkward. In all human probability, basing the estimate on the official returns already received, these circumstances wouldn't occur again in the course of half a century or more. You see it was this way: Saturday, the 8th day of December (it is well to be particular about dates), a young man connected with the editorial staff of the *Constitution* strolled into the office, seated himself at his desk, and proceeded in a leisurely way to forge a few paragraphical hurrahs in token that the citizens of Atlanta were keenly alive to the significance of the majority their city had received in the recent election. He was thus engaged when his at-



tention was attracted by a buff card lying within convenient reach. It was impossible not to see it, and, seeing it, it was impossible not to realize its significance. The Editorial Presence had placed it there. The Editorial Hand had penned the four words written upon its embossed face. "Something light for Sunday!" It was intended to be a suggestion; it was really a problem. "Something light for Sunday!" The young man pondered long and sorely. He could have written an article in defense of Atlanta in short order; he could have dashed off a score of paragraphic flippancies with little or no difficulty; but "something light for Sunday" was rather more than he bargained for.

Howbeit, he made an effort. He tackled the problem then and there, and after working himself into a condition to appreciate the poetry there is in Sidney Lanier's apt remark about "the sweat of fight" came forth a conqueror. He had successfully composed "something light for Sunday"—that is to say, he had written an article that might possibly have been transported through the mails for a dollar and a half's worth of three-cent stamps; but it seemed to him, after all the trouble he had encountered, that it weighed fully thirty-nine pounds and a half, or only about seven pounds and a quarter less than some of the light articles you meet up with in the newspapers. The article was handed in, duly considered; and as "something light for Sunday" seemed to be a pressing public necessity, it was allowed to appear in print. This, it must be remembered, was Saturday, the 8th day of December.

Wednesday, the 12th day of December inst., the Editorial Presence, after fumbling around in its coat tail pockets, produced the following letter, which was handed over to the conscience-smitten wretch who had written "something light for Sunday":

*"Dear Mr. Editor:* I read your piece on the 'Old Plantation' all through, and I liked it ever so much. Mamma says it is ever so nice, but papa says it is all stuff; and I thought I would write and ask if Miss Carrie de Compton was a real, sure-enough person and if young ladies really went hunting foxes. Mamma says editors don't have time

to be troubled, but I told her you wouldn't mind if I told you I was a little girl only nine years old and named Carrie too.

CARRIE ABERCROMBIE.

"P. S.—Please tell me."

"Well, I'll be hanged," exclaimed the young man, "if some people"—

The Editorial Presence waved him down, as it were. "You must remember," said the E. P. gently and almost with a sigh, "that the letter is written by a little child."

"But, goodness me! What are we going to do about it?"

The Editorial Presence smiled (it has a way of smiling when it gets a fellow in a corner): "Was there ever such a place as Rockville?"

"Why, you don't suppose"—

"Was there any such person as the fair De Compton?"

"My gracious! You can't mean to insinuate"—

"Write about them. The little girl will be interested, if no one else is. Give us 'something light for Sunday,'" and the Editorial Presence glided out to get oysters.

"I'll give you something light," the young man muttered between his clinched teeth. "I'll show you miserable readers what it is to swallow and digest a cold literary flatiron." And then all was silent in the sanctum except the noise made by a venerable rat whose experience had given an epicurean twang to his taste and who, taking up a position behind the wainscoting, refused to be mollified because the paste was stale.

## II

In the season of 1863 the Rockville Hunting Club, which had been newly organized, was at the height of its success. It was composed of men who were too old to go into the army and of young men who were old enough, but who from one cause and another were exempted from military service. Ostensibly its object was to encourage the noble sport of fox-hunting and to bind by closer social ties the congenial souls whose love for horses and hound and horn bordered on enthusiasm. This, I say, was its ostensible object: for it seems to me, looking back upon that terrible time, that the main object of the association was to devise new methods of forgetting the sickening portents of dis-

aster that were even then thick in the air. Any suggestion or plan calculated to relieve the mind from the contemplation of the horrors of those desperate days was eagerly seized upon and utilized. With the old men and fledgling boys in the neighborhood of Rockville the desire to momentarily escape the realities of the present took the shape of fox-hunting and other congenial amusements. With the women—ah, well! Heaven only knows how they sat dumb and silent over their great anguish and grief, cheering the hopeless and comforting and succoring the sick and wounded. It was a mystery to me then, and it is a mystery now.

About the 1st of November the writer received a long-expected letter from Tom Tunison, the secretary of the club, who was on a visit to Monticello. It was characteristically brief and breezy.

"Young man," he wrote, "we've got 'em. They are coming. They are going to give us a raffle. Their dogs are good, but they lack form and finish as well as discipline—plenty of bottom, but no confidence. I haven't hesitated to put up the horn. Get the boys together and tell 'em about it and see that our own eleven are in fighting trim. You won't believe it, but Sue, Herndon, Kate, and Walthall are coming with the party, and the fair De Compton, who set all the Monticello boys wild last year when she got back from Macon, vows and declares she is coming too. You can bet your sweet life she's a rattler. Remember, the 15th. Be prepared."

I took in the situation at a glance. Tom in his reckless style had bantered a party of Jasper County men as to the inferiority of their dogs and had even offered to give them an opportunity to wear the silver-mounted horn, won by the Rockville Club in Hancock County the year before. The Jasper County men, who were really breeding some excellent dogs, accepted the challenge, and Tom had invited them to share the hospitality of the plantation home called Bachelor's Hall. If the truth must be confessed, I was not at all grieved at the announcement made in Tom's letter. Apart from the agreeable change in the social atmosphere that would be made by the presence of ladies in Bachelor's Hall, I was eagerly anxious to test the mettle

of a favorite hound, Flora, whose care and training had cost me a great deal of time and trouble. Although it was her first season in the field, she had already become the pet and pride of the Rockville Club, the members of which were not slow to sound her praises. Flora was an experiment. She was the result of a cross between the Henry hound (called in Georgia the "Bird-song dog," in honor of their most successful breeder) and the Maryland hound. She was a granddaughter of the famous Hodo and in everything except her color (she was white, with yellow ears) was the exact counterpart of that magnificent fox hound. I was anxious to see her put to the test.

It was with no small degree of satisfaction, therefore, that I informed Aunt Patience, the cook, of Tom's program. Aunt Patience was a privileged character, and her comments upon people and things were free and frequent; and when she heard that a party of hunters, accompanied by ladies, proposed to make the Hall their temporary headquarters, her remarks were ludicrously indignant.

"Well, ef dat Marse Tom ain't de beatenest white man dat I ever sot eyes on! 'Way off yander givin' 'way his vittles 'fo' he buy um at de sto'. How I know what Marse Tom want? An' ef I know, whar I gwineter git um? Better be home yer lookin' atter dese lazy niggers stidder high-flyin' wid dem Jasper County folks. Ef dez enny vittles on dis plan'ash'n, hit's more'n I knows un. En he'll trollops roun' wid dem harium-skarium gals twell I boun' he don't fetch dat pipe an' dat 'backer what he said he would. Can't fool me 'bout de gals what grows up dese days. Dey duz like dey wantan stan' up an' cuss deysef case dey wuzn't born'd men."

"Why, Aunt Patience, your Marse Tom says Miss de Compton is as pretty as a pink and as fine as a fiddle." The observant reader will perceive that I failed to quote Tom's language correctly.

"Law, chile, you needn't talk 'bout de gals to dis ole 'oman! I done know um 'fo' you wuz born'd. W'en you see Miss de Compton, you see all de balance un um. Deze is new times. Marse Tom's mammy use ter spin her fifteen cuts a day. When you see yo' Miss Compton wid a hank er yarn in 'er han', you jes' sen' me word."

Whereupon Aunt Patience gave her head handkerchief a vigorous wrench and went her way, the good old soul, even then considering how she should best go about preparing a genuine surprise for her young master in the shape of daily feasts for a dozen guests. I shall not stop here to detail the character of this preparation nor to dwell upon its ultimate success. It is enough to say that Tom Tunison praised Aunt Patience to the skies, and, as if this were not enough to make her happy, he produced a big clay pipe, three plugs of real "manufacturer 'backer," which was hard to get in those times, a red shawl, and twelve yards of calico.

The fortnight that followed the arrival of Tom's guests was one long to be remembered not only in the annals of the Rockville Hunting Club, but in the annals of Rockville itself. The fair De Compton literally turned the heads of old men and young boys and even succeeded in conquering the critics of her own sex. She was marvelously beautiful, and her beauty was of a kind to haunt one in one's dreams. It was easy to perceive that she had made a conquest of Tom, and I knew that every suggestion he made and every project he planned had for its sole end and aim the enjoyment of Miss Carrie de Compton.

It was several days before the minor details of the contest which was at once the excuse for and the object of the visit of Tom's guests could be arranged, but finally everything was "amicably adjusted" and the day appointed. The night before the hunt the club and the Jasper County visitors assembled in Tom Tunison's parlors for a final discussion of the event.

"In order," said Tom, "to give our friends and guests an opportunity to fully test the speed and bottom of their kennels, it has been decided to pay our respects to 'Old Sandy.'"

"And pray, Mr. Tunison, who is 'Old Sandy?'" queried Miss de Compton.

"He is a fox, Miss de Compton, and a tough one. He is a trained fox. He has been hunted so often by the inferior packs in his neighborhood that he is well-nigh invincible. Between midnight and dawn, if he hears the bark of a dog or the sound of a horn, he is up and away. He is

so well known that he has not been hunted, except by accident, for two seasons. He is not as suspicious as he was two years ago, but we must be careful if we want to get within hearing distance of him to-morrow morning."

"Do any of the ladies go with us?" asked Jack Herndon.

"I go, for one," responded Miss de Compton, and in a few minutes all the ladies had decided to go along, even if they found it inconvenient to participate actively when the trouble began.

"Then," said Tom, rising, "we must say good night. Uncle Plato will sound 'boot and saddle' at four o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Four o'clock!" exclaimed the ladies in dismay.

"At four precisely," answered Tom, and the ladies with pretty little glances and gestures of mock despair went upstairs, while Tom prepared to brew something warm for the boys.

My friend little knew how delighted I was that "Old Sandy" was to be put through his paces. He little knew how carefully I had studied the characteristics of this famous fox; how often when training Flora I had taken her out alone and followed "Old Sandy" through all his ranges; how I had "felt of" both his speed and bottom and knew all his weak points.

### III

But morning came and with it Uncle Plato's bugle call. Aunt Patience was ready with a smoking hot breakfast, and everybody was in fine spirits as the eager, happy crowd filed down the broad avenue that led to the hall. The fair De Compton, who had been delayed in mounting, rode up by my side.

"You choose your escort well," I ventured to say.

"I have a weakness for children," she replied, "particularly for children who know what they are about. Plato has told me that if I desired to see all of the hunt without much trouble to follow you. I am selfish, you will perceive."

Thus we rode over the red hills and under the russet trees until we came to "Old Sandy's" favorite haunt. Here a council of war was held, and it was decided that Tom and a portion of the hunters should skirt the fields; while

another portion, led by Miss de Compton and myself, should enter and bid the fox good morning. Uncle Plato, who had been given the cue, followed me with the dogs, and in a few moments we were very near to the particular spot where I had hoped to find the venerable deceiver of dogs and men. The hounds were already sallying hither and thither, anxious and evidently expectant. Five minutes go without a whimper from the pack. There is not a sound save the eager rustling of the dogs through the sedge and undergrowth. The ground is familiar to Flora, and I watch her with pride as with powerful strides she circles around. She draws nearer and nearer. Suddenly she pauses and flings her head in the air, making a beautiful picture as she stands poised as if listening. My heart gives a great thump. It is an old trick of hers, and I know that "Old Sandy" has been around within the past twenty-four hours. With a rush, a bound, and an eager cry, my favorite comes toward us, and the next moment "Old Sandy," who has been lying almost at our horses' feet, is up and away, with Flora right at his heels. A wild hope seizes me that my favorite will run into the sly veteran before he can get out of the field. But no! One of the Jasper County hunters, rendered momentarily insane by excitement, endeavored to ride the fox down with his horse; and in another moment Sir Reynard is over the fence and into the woodland beyond, followed by the hounds. They make a splendid but ineffectual burst of speed, for when "Old Sandy" finds himself upon the black-jack hills he is foot-loose. The morning, however, is fine, just damp enough to leave the scent of the fox hanging breast-high in the air, whether he shape his course over lowland or highland. In the midst of all the confusion that has ensued Miss de Compton remains cool, serene, and apparently indifferent; but I observe a glow upon her face and a sparkle in her eyes as Tom Tunison, riding his gallant gray and heading the hunters, easily and gracefully takes a couple of fences as the hounds veer to the left.

"Our Jasper County friend has saved 'Old Sandy,' Miss de Compton, but he has given us an opportunity of witnessing some very fine sport. The fox is badly frightened, and he may endeavor in the beginning to outfoot the dogs;

but in the end he will return to his range, and then I hope to show you what a cunning old customer he is. If Flora doesn't fail us at the critical moment, you will have the honor of wearing his brush on your saddle."

"Youth is always confident," replied Miss de Compton.

"In this instance, however, I have the advantage of knowing both hound and fox. Flora has a few of the weaknesses, but I think she understands what is expected of us to-day."

Thus bantering and chaffing each other, we turned our horses' heads in a direction oblique of that taken by the other hunters, who, with the exception of Tom Tunison and Jack Herndon, who were well up with the dogs, were struggling along as best they could. For half a mile or more we cantered down a lane, turned into a stubble field, and made for a hill crowned and skirted with a growth of blackjack, through which, as it seemed, an occasional pine had broken in a vain but majestic effort to touch the sky. Once upon the summit of this hill, we had a majestic view upon all sides. The fresh morning breezes blew crisp and cool and bracing, but not uncomfortable after the exercise we had taken; and as the clouds that had muffled up the east dispersed themselves or were dissolved, the generous sun spread layer after layer of golden light upon hill and valley and forest and stream. Miss de Compton did not go into ecstasies over the scene that met her view, albeit I could perceive that she enjoyed it in detail and as a whole with the keen appreciation of an artist, and it was this fact that first impressed me with the idea that she would make an excellent Mrs. Tom Tunison.

Away to the left we could hear the hounds, and the music of their voices, toyed with by the playful wind, rolled itself into melodious little echoes that broke pleasantly upon the ear, now loud, now faint, now far, and now near. The first burst of speed, which had been terrific, had settled down into a steady run; but I knew by the sound that the pace was tremendous, and I imagined I could hear the silvery tongue of Flora as she led the eager pack. The music of the hounds, however, grew fainter and fainter, until presently it was lost in the distance.



"He is making a straight shoot for the Turner old fields, two miles away," I remarked by way of explanation.

"And pray why are we here?" Miss de Compton asks.

"To be in at the death. [The fair De Compton smiles sarcastically.] In the Turner old fields the fox will make his grand double, gain upon the dogs, head for yonder hill, come down the ravine here upon our right, and at the fence here within plain view he will attempt a trick that has heretofore always been successful and which has given him his reputation as a trained fox. I depend upon the intelligence of Flora to see through 'Old Sandy's' strategy, but if she hesitates a moment we must set the dogs right."

I speak with the confidence of one having experience, and Miss de Compton smiles and is content. We have time for little further conversation, for in a few minutes I observe a dark shadow emerge from the undergrowth on the opposite hill and slip quickly across the open space of fallow land. It crosses the ravine that intersects the valley and steals quietly through the stubble to the fence and there pauses for a moment as if hesitating. In a low voice I call Miss de Compton's attention to the fox, but she refuses to believe it is the fox we aroused thirty minutes ago. Howbeit, it is the veritable "Old Sandy" himself. I would know him among a thousand foxes. He is not in as fine feather as when at the start he swung his brush across Flora's nose; the pace has told on him, but he still moves with an air of confidence. Then and there Miss de Compton beholds a display of fox tactics, shrewd enough to excite the admiration of the most indifferent, a display of cunning that seems to have been conceived by something higher than mere instinct.

"Old Sandy" pauses a moment. With a bound he goes to the top of the fence, stops to pull something from one of his forefeet (probably a cockle burr), and then, carefully balancing himself, proceeds to walk the fence. By this time the music of the dogs is again heard in the distance, but "Old Sandy" takes his time. One, two, three, seven, ten, twenty panels of the fence are cleared. Pausing, he again subjects his forefeet to examination and licks them carefully. Then he proceeds on his journey along the fence until he is at least one hundred yards from where

he left the ground. Here he pauses for the last time, gathers himself together, leaps through the air, and is away. As he does so the full music of the pack bursts upon our ears as the hounds reach the brow of the hill from the lowlands on the other side.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Miss de Compton, "that fox ought to go free. I shall beg Mr. Tunison"—

But before she can finish her sentence the dogs come into view, and I can hardly restrain a desire to give a shout of triumph as I see Flora running easily and unerringly far to the front. Behind her, led by Captain ——— and so close together that, as Uncle Plato afterwards remarked, "You mout kivver de whole caboodle wid a hoss blanket," are the remainder of the Tunison kennel, while the Jasper hounds are strung out in wild but heroic confusion. I am strongly tempted to give the vain halloo and push "Old Sandy" to the wall at once, but I feel sure that the fair De Compton will regard the exploit with severe reprobation forever after.

Across the ravine and to the fence they come, their voices as they get nearer crashing through the silence like a chorus of demons. At the fence they pause. Now is the critical moment. If Flora should fail me— Several of the older dogs top the rails and scatter through the undergrowth. Flora comes over with them, makes a small circle, with her sensitive nose to the damp earth, and then goes rushing down the fence past the point where "Old Sandy" took his flying leap. She runs, turns suddenly to the left, and comes swooping back in a wide circle, and I have barely time to warn Miss de Compton that she must prepare to do a little riding, when my favorite, with a fierce cry of delight that thrills me through and through, picks up the blazing drag, and away we go with a scream and a shout. I feel in my very bones that "Old Sandy" is doomed. I have never seen Flora so prompt and eager; I have never known the scent to lie better. Everything is auspicious. We go like the wind, Miss de Compton rides well, and the long stretches of stubble land through which the chase leads are unbroken by ditch or fence. The pace of the hounds is simply terrific, and I know that no fox on earth can long stand up before the white demon that leads the

hunt with such fierce splendor. Five, ten, fifteen minutes we rush at the heels of the rearmost dogs, until suddenly we find ourselves in the midst of the pack. The scent is lost! Flora runs about in wild circles, followed by the greater portion of the dogs. To the left, to the right they go, until, chancing to look back, I catch a glimpse of "Old Sandy," broken down and bedraggled, making his way toward a clump of briars. He has played his last trump and lost. Pushed by the dogs, he has dropped in his tracks and literally allowed them to run over him. I ride at him with a shout. There is a short, sharp race, and in a few moments "La Mort" is sounded over the famous fox on the horn that the Jasper County boys didn't win.

## IV

Dear little Carrie Abercrombie, your note is answered; and if the writer hereof has succeeded in entertaining you and worrying the rest of his readers, he will feel amply repaid for the trouble he has occasioned the Editorial Presence. Perhaps you would like to be told that the fair De Compton became Mrs. Tunison, but such a statement, little Carrie, would not be according to the facts of the case. Of all those who went to make the brilliant pageant that moved merrily over the hills with song and shout and laughter on that memorable morning, but few ever met each other again. Tom Tunison, gallant, gifted, and true-hearted, fell at the battle of Griswoldville, where so many noble lives were needlessly sacrificed. Miss de Compton, I am told, married a man from Texas, who didn't treat her well, and she is teaching school in Mississippi. The others—but why not drop the whole matter just here? It is not my desire to pursue the reader, and it is to be feared that anything further in this line would be construed into a willful and unjustifiable attack.

J. C. H.

### III

#### THE ROMANCE OF ROCKVILLE

BY JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

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#### I<sup>1</sup>

##### *As to the Village*

To write accurately or even adequately of Rockville; one would have to fall into the idyllic mood. The peace and quiet that surrounded the little village were immemorial and the serenity complete. Rockville rhymed with all seasons, and each rhyme seemed perfect in its way. In the springtime the red hills robed themselves in green, the pines clothed themselves anew, and the mighty oaks put forth their leaves. The martins flocked musically about the eaves of the white courthouse, the dogwood blossoms gleamed white and fair in the valleys, and the peach orchards were so complete in their beauty as to suggest to the village poet, who was clerking in a grocery store, the idea that they had been subjected to a fall of pink snow, an idea which he embodied in a poem of thirty-six stanzas printed in the Middle Georgia *Vade Mecum*, a six-column weekly devoted (if the advertisement of Plunker, the editor, was to be believed) to "literature, art, science, and the news." The schoolboys waded in the branch that skirted the town, catching minnows and avoiding moccasins with a precision that was rather a tribute to their instincts than to their training. The bluebirds flitted hither and thither, hunting homes in hollow posts and trees, and the robins, flying northward, paused to surfeit themselves with the ripe china

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<sup>1</sup>Cartersville *Express*: "J. C. Harris, of the *Atlanta Constitution*, is sick with measles. The consequence is that the 'Romance of Rockville' will not begin before next week. Joe ought to have had measles when a little boy, and they would not be troubling him now at a critical point in his literary fame." [*Constitution* (Weekly), April 16, 1878.]

berries that grew in profusion in the town. This was in springtime.

In summer the inhabitants of Rockville gave themselves over to perspiration, even the poet deigning to appear upon the streets without his coat. The cattle forsook the open pastures and concealed themselves as best they could from the observation of the sun by taking refuge under the tall oaks on the hillsides or browsing carelessly among the elder bushes and willows on the brookside. It is to be feared that some verbal critic, following with some degree of pains this unpretentious chronicle, will smile when he reads of "elder bushes"; but I confidently appeal to the pop-gun brigade of the present generation to bear me out in the spelling. This was in summer time.

In autumn the hickory trees changed from green to golden yellow, the sweet gum shone red in the forest, and among the pines could be seen an occasional sentinel of the season clad in sober russet. The chestnut faded out utterly, and the leaves of the dogwood glowed as though a torch had been lighted in the deep, dark woods.

I suppose that other places were as rhythmically set to the seasons as Rockville, but it is next to impossible to believe it; and as for the people, I am quite sure that no other Georgia town had its Bledsoes, its Spiveys, its Dagleys, and its Padgetts, and I am sure, moreover, that no other village in all this wide world had its Miss Perryman, its Mrs. Pruitt, its Mrs. Padgett, or its Mrs. Dusenberry. I say this advisedly.

But for all this, it is almost too absurd to believe that Rockville ever had a romance of any sort, and I am not sure that the title that I have affixed to this rambling and disconnected chronicle is not in some degree an exaggeration intended to entrap the unwary reader; for of all villages in the universe Rockville would be the least likely to have a romance or anything bordering thereupon. Save upon sale days, when the Wards, the Fullers, the Caswells, and the Dawsons rode carelessly into town and, tying their horses to the various convenient racks about the public square, proceeded to fire upon each other from behind convenient corners and eligible tree corners, Rockville was the quietest place imaginable. As I have said, its serenity was

immemorial, for it would ill become me as a dignified chronicler to dwell upon or even to take into consideration the family feuds of the Wards and the Dawsons. They were fierce enough, heaven knows, and deadly enough, but neither their foolish causes nor their deadly results disturbed the peace of Rockville. Nor was this pastoral repose broken by the utilitarian devices of the present age. Neither the hiss of steam nor the roar of machinery was heard. The whistle of a locomotive would have thrown the community into convulsions, and the setting up of a barber's sign would in all probability have resulted in an indignation meeting. Indeed, I am not sure that in 1848 the barber had been invented; certainly not, so far as Rockville was concerned. There were hair dressers, to be sure, but the man with the razor was unknown to the civilization of the little town.

What is now called the Rockville Hotel was then known as Bagley's Tavern; and albeit it might be policy to admit that the name has been improved as to euphony, Mr. Bagley himself will tell you, should you chance to meet him, that it is not at all safe that the seasoning of the soup is one whit more artistic as to accuracy and timeliness, or, to use Mr. Bagley's own expression, "puttin' paint on the roof didn't whitewash the cellar." You will be introduced to Bagley later on, but in the meantime you must take my word for it that he was what the boys around town called a character. The Middle Georgia *Vade Mecum* has also changed its name, after an interval of long suspension; but it is by no means sure that Col. Pontius Bogardus, who now edits it, is a more conscientious guide of public opinion or a safer counselor of the nation than the amiable Plunker, who was one of the pioneer journalists of his day. A daily train of cars has taken the place of the stagecoach that connected Rockville with the outside world, but I am inclined to doubt whether this mode of communication is more satisfactory than that afforded by the big red coach and the spanking four-in-hand that John Bell used to drive.

In a word, Rockville in 1848 was as thoroughly provincial as isolation could make it and as thoroughly satisfied with itself. For the rest, it had a church—a union church—which was the pride of the village, and two good schools

whose fame had gone abroad, attracting pupils from all sections. The first in importance, as far as I can gather from the files of the *Vade Mecum*, still preserved in the office of the ordinary, was the male academy presided over by William Wornum. The female academy was under the supervision of Miss Kate Underwood, a lady who had ventured to leave her home in Vermont for the purpose of reclaiming the people of the South from the heathenism in which she had been taught to believe they languished. Her notions with respect to the barbarism of the people among whom she had cast her lot underwent a speedy change, and she established a school for girls that became renowned for the thoroughness of its discipline and the completeness of its curriculum. In forgetting her mission she but made it the more complete, managing in a motherly sort of way to infuse into her pupils something of the New England thrift and energy characteristic of her race and training.

Thus it came about that Rockville was well satisfied with itself, and some of the leading citizens even looked forward to the day when their interests would be uplifted upon a wave of progress. Precisely from what direction this wave would flow was not a subject of calculation among the sages and the prophets who gathered on the street corners every day or who congregated around the stove in Floyd's bar, which, I have omitted to mention, was one of the institutions of the place.

## II

### *The Boy in the Tree*

The springtime dropped suddenly upon Rockville, crept up in a night, as it seemed, and filled the town with swollen buds and bursting blossoms and sprinkled an indefinable odor of new life and freshness upon the sweet, cool air of the morning. When I say that spring crept up on Rockville in a night, I speak literally, for it took Miss Jane Perryman by surprise, and those who lived in Rockville in 1848 and remember her bustling ways, her trenchant tongue, and her active charity do not need to be told that spring was a very subtle season if it found Miss Jane un-

prepared; and yet this particular spring had slipped down from the sun with such surprising quietness that when Miss Jane came out one morning, broom in hand, and found that the china trees in front of her gate had taken unto themselves various severe symptoms of greenness she was seized with a horrible suspicion that age was dulling her observation, for the brown hair that the breeze managed to blow loose from the prim tucking comb was largely mingled with gray. This suspicion was verified when Miss Jane came to inspect her violet bed, for scattered here and there, hidden by the leaves, she found more than one modest little witness, testifying by its odorous presence to the fact that some occult influence had made itself felt. Discovering these things, Miss Jane leant upon her broom a moment and looked first at the budding trees and then at the far blue sky. In a china tree near at hand a mocking bird, stirred by some mysterious impulse of the season, gave a premonitory whistle and then broke forth into a matchless melody; while in the sky a swallow, quivering and twittering, swept swiftly across the field of blue. Before Miss Jane could adjust her spectacles to follow the uncertain flight of the swallow, a yellow butterfly, darting hither and thither as though perplexed with the newness of things, lit upon the wall of the little cottage just where the sun shone brightest and then proceeded with great apparent satisfaction to fold and unfold its wonderful wings, as if by that process it would catch a larger supply of the warmth that seemed to be wasting in the cool shadows that, drifting around this one spot of brightness in wavy successions, made it in some sort an island of sunshine. But the fact that the sun had found Miss Jane in bed gave her some excuse for resenting the perplexing forwardness of the season, and she gave vent to her vexation by addressing the butterfly: "I lay ef I fetch you a swipe with this broom you won't be lightin' round here to do your noddin'."

But the domestic weapon which Miss Jane poised in the air did not descend. Just at that moment a bee, coaxed into the sunlight by the exceeding graciousness of the weather, flittered into the porch and hovered a moment in a languid and despondent manner among the unfruitful vines that clambered to the roof of the little cottage. Some-



how or other the noise of the bee arrested the attention of Miss Jane. It carried her back to the days when she used to hunt for honeysuckles somewhere on the banks of the Oconee, and the broom that had been raised to demolish the butterfly was stayed and fell harmlessly to the floor. In a moment Miss Jane had forgotten both butterfly and bee, for just across the narrow street, shaded by china-berry trees, was a new sign staring her in the face. It had gone up in a night. Never before did anything occur in Rockville without previously coming to the knowledge of Miss Jane, but here was the sign in plain view, "D. Vanderlyn, Gunmaker." Miss Jane regarded it with astonishment.

"Much we want with gunmakers, I reckon. Nobody roun' here lacks fer a gun 'cept it's George McHenry, an' he's a born loony."

But the sign was there, whatever Miss Jane might say. It was a tin sign, too, neatly painted and swung easily in the cool breeze that somewhat tempered the balminess of the spring morning. Miss Jane was really puzzled. The shop was a new establishment, so far as her knowledge was concerned, and the business of gunmaking, she was willing to vow, having lived in the village for nearly thirty years, was a novelty in Rockville; but the fact that the occupant thereof had moved in, bag and baggage, and put up his sign without once attracting her attention or that of her neighbors was a source of great perplexity to the veteran maiden, and she stood staring at the phenomenon with unusual interest. She had one consolation, however. Neither Mrs. Pruitt, the mantaumaker, nor Mrs. Dusenberry, the little tailor's wife, knew anything about the matter; and what they didn't know, Miss Jane inwardly remarked, "nobody else needn't try to find out." While Miss Jane was thus standing, wondering how a new inhabitant could have settled in Rockville without her knowledge, the bee, buzzing around the little porch in a benumbed and bewildered way, struck the defiantly poised broom and fell to the floor, where, lighting upon its back, it vainly endeavored to clutch the air with its feet. This aroused Miss Jane.

"Well, the Lord 'a' massy! Nobody can't never have any peace. In the winter you are freezin' to death, and when warm weather comes it's as much as you kin do to keep

the bees and the bugs outen your years. But I lay I'll fix you."

But she didn't carry out her purpose. Just at that moment a voice that seemed to come from overhead called out: "Ef you fool with that fellow much, you'll have to tote a poultice around."

It was not an unpleasant voice, and for a wonder Miss Jane was not startled. Looking up, she caught sight of a boy nestling and swinging in the topmost branches of the china-berry tree in front of the porch. If Miss Jane had an aversion upon earth, it was the small boy, and the sight of this particular youth caused her wonder to culminate in genuine vexation.

"Come right down from thar this minnit! I ain't gwine to have my trees broke down. I'll holler for Uncle Ben ef you don't move. Whatter you doin' up thar, anyhow?"

"O, I'm jest a-lookin' at the birds. I ain't doing no damage."

It was a bright, pleasant, laughing face that the boy turned on Miss Jane as he replied, and I am not sure that it did not in some degree take the edge off her anger; but if she was at all mollified, it was not apparent in her tone: "Yes, you are doin' damage, an' the fus' thing you know that lim'll break, an' you'll git your chunk knocked out."

Miss Jane was not particularly fond of children. She had little or no sympathy with the spirit of perverse humor that prompted the average small boy to trample upon flower beds, rob birds' nests, and make himself ridiculously ruinous in the several and various directions suggested by his extraordinary ingenuity. Upon one memorable occasion the Rockville small boy had even gone so far as to make a raid, and a very disastrous one, upon Miss Jane's bergamot bed, and her primroses and oleanders had likewise suffered. From that moment Miss Jane declared open war against the whole tribe of small boys, and her reputation for ferocity was widespread.

"I ain't goin' to have any trees broke up an' tore down by nobody, much less by you young rascallions. Ef you don't come down, I'll call Mr. Wornum. You forgot he was boarding here, I reckon."

Miss Jane was so accustomed to ignore the boys with

whom she came in contact that they were like a herd of bay horses to her, all bad and all alike. She concluded, therefore, that the brat who was perched amid the budding greenness of her china tree was one of the pupils of William Wornum, principal of the Rockville Male Academy.

"I was jes' comin' over to see him," responded the boy laughingly; "but it looked so nice up here that I thought I'd climb up here an' set in the sun."

Miss Jane was not as angry as she supposed she would be, but she kept up the pretense.

"Well, you'll see 'im soon enough fer your good, I reckon," she said and swept indignantly into the house.

"She's goin' to fetch him out now," the boy said, laughing outright, "and raise a rumpus. But ef he gits to kickin' too high, I guess Dan'll cool 'im off."

It appeared to the bright-eyed chap who sat in his high perch, swinging his feet thoughtfully in the fresh air of the morning, that Miss Jane was a long time on her errand. Presently, however, he heard voices in the house, Miss Jane's sharp tones mingling with a man's pleasant voice.

"He's a-settin' up thar," Miss Jane was saying, "jes' as sassy as ef he owned the place." Then they both came out, and the boy beheld the man who, above all others, was to mold and fashion his life—William Wornum, schoolmaster. He was a tall, serious-looking man, but this appearance of gravity was the result rather of the thoughtfulness of the face than of any peculiarity of temper. Consequently when he lifted his eyes, glancing in the direction indicated by Miss Jane's threatening forefinger, and saw the smiling face of the youthful culprit, he burst out laughing—a very pleasant laugh, the boy thought—and said: "Well, upon my word, Miss Jane, I think the boy ought to receive praise instead of blame! Not a boy in my school could clamber to that perch. What is your name, young man?"

"Jack Vanderlyn," replied the boy, blushing like a girl.

"Well, John Vanderlyn"—

"But Dan calls me Jack."

"And pray who is Dan?"

"Don't you know Dan? Why, we've been in town more'n a week, Dan an' me is. That's Dan's store," pointing in the direction of the swaying tin sign that had attracted the

notice of Miss Jane. With the intuition natural to children and to dumb animals, he had already caught and gauged the gentleness of the schoolmaster and appreciated as only a boy can the whimsical humor that characterized William Wornum. "I jes' started to go in an' see you, but I was afeared er rouzin' the house, an' so I thought I'd sorter wait roun'."

"I hope," said the schoolmaster with great apparent seriousness, "that you didn't expect to find me roosting in the tree?"

"O, goodness no! But you might fine wus' places. Many a time Dan an' me would 'a' felt mighty good ef we could 'a' found a tree like this 'ere."

"I know'd he wuz a heathen," replied Miss Jane with unction. "I know'd it the minnit I sot eyes on him."

"Yes," said the schoolmaster; "but you must remember that the heathen have given us our greatest philosophers."

"Well, ef I wuz you, William Wornum, I wouldn't make fun of the child," said Miss Jane, suddenly changing her tone and her tactics.

William Wornum turned suddenly and looked at his landlady. He was used to her eccentricities of temper, but something in her voice arrested his attention; and as he glanced quickly at the worn, trouble-scarred face before him he thought he caught a glimpse of something like tenderness in the sharp, shrewd eyes, and he was certain that she looked at the boy and smiled, a bright but weary smile, as it seemed to the schoolmaster.

Who shall solve for us the mystery of children's faces? Rough men—miners and convicts—have been known to fall a-weeping at the sight of a child's face, and most of us, I imagine, have been thrilled through and through with emotions similar, but less acute. Somehow or other the laughing face of the little boy, framed in the green leaves of the china tree, reminded Miss Jane most vividly of a time when she too was young and hopeful, when hand in hand with a fair, brave youth she wandered through the glad green land. The youth who had wandered with Miss Jane and who came back to her now as a vision had died years before. His dearest friends had forgotten him, and even Miss Jane had ceased, save in a vague way, to clothe

his memory with regret; but to-day in some mysterious manner the face of the wayward boy of whom she desired the schoolmaster to make an example brought back to her mournfully pleasant memories of the olden time.

"I am far from making fun of this youth, Miss Jane," said the schoolmaster. "I was merely gloating over the fact that we have captured him. He is ours. It is impossible for him to escape. What shall we do with him?"

"Let 'im alone. Goodness knows it consolation 'nuff to know't he ain't one o' the nasty pack that sets up in your schoolhouse an' hatches devilment day in an' day out."

The schoolmaster smiled. "Go, John Vanderlyn," said he in a semi-tragic voice. "You have trespassed most grossly upon the premises of this lady here, but she pardons you."

"Gracious me, William Wornum! Folks a-goin' by'd take you for a nateral-born lunatic. Come down, Vandler-min, or whatever your name is. Yon ain't kilt the tree, I reckon."

"Lor', no'm! Dan says I'm as light as a feather an' swift as a bird."

"Dan's a loony," remarked Miss Jane sententiously.

"It is my opinion, young man," said the schoolmaster, smiling one of his most serious smiles, "that you have fallen among enemies who are friends in disguise; and if mine eyes deceive me not, you will soon find out their various weaknesses."

"I told Dan I was comin' over to see the school-teacher, but it looked like to me it was too soon, an' so I jes' thought I'd git up here an' play like I was a jay bird."

"Well, upon my soul," replied the schoolmaster in a tone that irritated Miss Jane, "your masquerade is wonderfully lifelike. You lack the wings, the feathers, and the remarkable topknot of the blue jay, but I dare say you are capable of kicking up quite as much of a rumpus. They are vociferous enough when they choose to be, these jay birds."

"Well, I don't care," said the boy seriously. "A jay bird lit right here on this limb awhile ago, an' he didn't squall much. He sorter ruffled hisself up, but he didn't flutter roun' like he was skeered."

"He wasn't one of Miss Jane's kind of birds," remarked the schoolmaster with such serious emphasis as to exasper-

ate his landlady; "otherwise your eyes would have been pecked out and your clothes torn off."

"That child don't know when you are jokin,' William Wornum," Miss Jane said in her most threatening tone.

"If you will fly down from your perch, Jack," remarked the schoolmaster, pretending to ignore Miss Jane's asperity, "if you will drop to the commonplace level of humanity, we can have a talk together. I believe you said you wanted to see me?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, sliding swiftly down the rough trunk of the tree. "Dan said he reckon I better come over an' see you."

### III

#### *The Boy and the Man*

The schoolmaster was bent upon taking his usual morning exercise, and the two—the man, who was still a boy, and the boy, who was longing to become a man—passed up the street together. Once the boy turned and smiled at Miss Jane as she stood watching them from the porch—a smile so fresh and bright that it stirred all the motherly instincts in the heart that throbbed so warmly and kindly beneath the weather-beaten bosom of the sharp-tongued old lady who made cynicism the shield of her sensitiveness.

Jack never forgot his morning's walk with the schoolmaster, and William Wornum frequently recurred to it afterwards. It was in some sort the opening of a new life to both. To the boy it was the beginning of a new, strange, and varied experience; while to the man it afforded a rare opportunity of studying the perplexing problem presented in the wayward frankness and freshness of a boy's nature. The streets of Rockville began in the public square which surrounded the courthouse, but they did not end there. They led out of the little village and soon became public highways or footpaths, sometimes running through long green lanes, upon whose fragrant verge the Cherokee roses blossomed, and then apparently lost themselves in the cool, green depths of the great woods. Taking one of these, the boy and the schoolmaster wandered out of the village to the open fields beyond. The schoolmaster was a close observer and enjoyed nature in all her variable moods with

the keenest appreciation, but he discovered that the boy's observation was closer and his appreciation far keener. He found a bunch of blossoming sheep sorrel and formed a pretty little bouquet of the delicate yellow flowers and endeavored to show his companion a rabbit in her form; but this was an impossible task, the schoolmaster refusing to believe that such a sight was within the range of his vision until Jack with a rush and a hurrah compelled the frightened animal to leave her cover, which was within a few yards of their feet.

It was Saturday, and the schoolmaster was in no hurry to leave the fields and the woods, and so he wandered on with the boy, answering his eager questions and enjoying his enthusiastic comments.

"Dan's been gittin' after me like brinjer," said the boy after awhile. "He says I am growin' up like an Arab, but he's afeard to send me to school 'cause the boys might sorter come it over me."

"Might do what?" asked the schoolmaster, slightly amazed.

"Might sorter come it over me. That's what Dan says. Might sorter git the inturn on me, you know. An' Dan he told me to come an' see how I'd like you fer a teacher."

"And what did you say?" asked the school-teacher, amused at the frankness of the boy.

"O, I didn't say much. I jes' told Dan it was like cripplin' a feller to shet 'im up in a little schoolroom all day. I'd git sick before we got to a-b, ab."

"And then Dan—this Dan of yours—what did he say to this?"

"Well, Dan he said some roosters were sech high flyers they had to be clipped sometimes. Dan goes on lots. He said when a chicken's wings got too big it was always found in somebody else's collard patch."

The earnestness of the boy struck the schoolmaster, and he laughed so heartily that the boy presently joined in, and such a chorus as they set to echoing among the resonant avenues of the forest had not been heard there for many and many a day. A ground squirrel, lurking near, like a shadow shot scross the opening and dived headlong into his hole, and a sage crow that had been swinging in

the topmost bough of a tall pine, watching the twain suspiciously, darted awkwardly into the air with loud cries, satisfied, no doubt, that a brace of lunatics were making themselves merry in the wood; for, in the experience of crows, it must be remembered the wise man carries a gun and seldom smiles. Howbeit, it may well be supposed that if there had been even the slightest suggestion of powder in the conversation between the man and the boy, it would never have been overheard by the cautious crow.

"Well, this Dan of yours is a philosopher, if you report him correctly," said the schoolmaster. "I mean," remembering that he was talking to an ignorant boy, "I mean that Dan is pretty well acquainted with people."

"An' I tole Dan," continued the boy as though nothing had occurred to interrupt the conversation, "that I didn't want to set up in one o' them close rooms; an' he ast me how I was goin' to learn to cipher an' talk big, an' I tole 'im I'd ketch you out some day, an' you could tell me all you know 'thout bein' shet up."

William Wornum, with all his eccentricities, was an exceedingly sensitive man, and he looked at the child in amazement. It came to him in the shape of a rebuke, and he received it as such. He had been toiling with books and loitering through the temple of knowledge for years, and yet here a child was saying, and saying truly, that he could tell all he knew in the course of a few hours' talk. In spite of himself, the thought oppressed him.

"Jack," said the schoolmaster somewhat sadly, "you know as much as I do."

"I don't know nothin'," answered the boy.

"Whereas I," responded William Wornum, "do know nothing."

"Well, what must I tell Dan?" asked the boy.

"Say to Dan that learning is a humbug."

"But it ain't, you know; and Dan 'd give me such another rakin' over the coals as a boy never got before."

"Have you a mother?" asked the schoolmaster after awhile.

"Nobody but Dan," the boy replied simply.

William Wornum looked at the child and fell to musing.



He thought it was such a pity that such a bright-eyed, curly-haired, quick-witted little boy shouldn't have a mother, not so much for the sake of the boy as for the sake of the mother. It would be a great source of pride and gratification, the schoolmaster thought, to some good woman to pass her hand gently over the wayward curls of this child and claim him as her own, her very own. For in all his experience with children he had never met with one quite so unaffectedly bright and precocious as this bashful, ignorant boy.

"You may tell this Dan of yours," said William Wornum presently, "that I will be glad to teach you, not the little that I know, but the great deal to be found in books, and you may tell him that my schoolroom is not such a tightly sealed apartment after all."

"O, that wasn't Dan," the boy hastened to say. "That was me. I tole Dan I didn't want to be shet up."

"Well, said the schoolmaster, rising from an aromatic couch of brown pine tags, "we will have to consult with Dan himself."

Whereupon the man and the boy wandered back to the village, the one serious and thoughtful and the other gay and communicative. Suddenly with a cry of "Yonder's Dan now!" the boy rushed off up the road to meet a tall person, who, disdaining the services of a coat on such a morning, was walking abroad in the good old country fashion that prevailed in those days and still prevails in the provincial regions. The schoolmaster had time to observe that Dan was a very tall, well-made man, a little fluffy about the face, a feature that seemed to add somehow to the appearance of awkward embarrassment characteristic in that day of people in his class. He wore a full beard, and his mild blue eyes contradicted the idea of pugnacity suggested by his large limbs and massive frame.

"This is Mr. Vanderlyn, I presume?" said the schoolmaster as Jack came up leading the giant by the hand.

"Yes, squire. Howdy."

"I have just been walking with Jack," remarked the schoolmaster, "and a famous morning we have made of it."

"Jack's been tellin' me. He's a buster, ain't he, squire?" lowering his voice to a confidential tone and chuckling a

little. "I tell folks ez soon's I see um, sez I, 'Gentlemen, you wanten keep your eyeballs on Jack.' He's a rattler, Jack is."

By this time Jack was far ahead, chasing a deceitful yellow butterfly which seemed always about to alight on some imaginary flower. The mild-eyed giant watched the gyrations of the boy and insect with great interest as he went on to tell the schoolmaster of the wonderful peculiarities of Jack.

"He is your only son, I take it," remarked the schoolmaster with an air of interest that seemed greatly to please Mr. Vanderlyn, for he became more enthusiastic than ever.

"Lor', bless you, yes! He's the onliest, and he's enough. Nobody don't want but one boy like Jack. Not but what he's a good 'un, but the man who keeps up with Jack is gotter git up mighty quick in the mornin'. Ez long as me an' Jack wuz a-trampin' an' a-trollopin' 'roun' I could sorter hold my own; but when I concluded for to settle down and do like the balance uv the white people, I know'd sump'n had to be done. But you won't have no trouble with Jack. It 'ud amaze you to see how the boy kin spell. Why, he sets down uv nights and translates all of the pictures in the books right straight 'long. He's a caution."

"I observe he doesn't call you 'father,'" said the schoolmaster.

"Well, I reckon not," replied the mild-eyed giant in a triumphant tone. "I reckon not. Me an' Jack's had too much fun together fer him to come a-daddyin' me. It ez as much ez I kin do fer to keep the boy straight now, much less ef he wuz to be sneakin' 'roun' callin' me his 'pa' an' denyin' all er his doin's. Me an' Jack's chums," continued this queer disciplinarian, "an' we don't have no secrets from one another. Ef Jack goes wrong, he comes and tells me; and ef I goes wrong, I ups and tells Jack. But he's mighty wild, that boy, and I bin thinkin' the best thing I could do ud be to shet 'im up like an' tie 'im down to bizness. Would you mind takin' him in hand, squire?"

No, the schoolmaster wouldn't mind. On the contrary, he was considerably struck with the peculiarities which distinguished Jack from the average boy and was glad enough

to "take him in hand." Whereupon it was settled that Jack was to become one of the pupils of William Wornum's school.

By this time the two had nearly reached a point opposite Miss Jane Perryman's little cottage, when they came upon Jack, who exclaimed in a suppressed voice: "Look yonder, Dan!"

Dan raised his eyes in the direction indicated by Jack and beheld a vision of such exquisite loveliness that he involuntarily poised and took off his hat. A young girl, her golden hair falling in great wavy masses below her waist, was standing on Miss Perryman's porch. One little hand rested upon the railing, while the other hung carelessly by her side. Her features were as perfect and as clear-cut as those of some rare old cameo and as serene as those of the Madonna. The sight of that face was familiar enough to William Wornum, but of late he never looked upon it without a thrill.

"That is Miss Nora Perryman," the schoolmaster said finally by way of explanation, "Miss Jane's sister. She is blind."

Vanderlyn started as though he had been shot. "Great God, schoolmaster! Blind?" The man was trembling all over.

"Yes, sir, blind, totally blind," the schoolmaster replied, regarding the gunmaker's excitement with surprise.

"Did anybody put her eyes out with a piece of hot iron?" asked Vanderlyn in a savage, half-suppressed whisper, his eyes blazing like two coals. The schoolmaster had never seen such a transformation, and he was inclined to believe for a moment that the man had suddenly become insane. "Did anybody put her eyes out with a piece of hot iron?" Vanderlyn repeated. "'Cause ef they did, I can spot the man that done it."

"Nó," said the schoolmaster. "She has never been otherwise than blind. Nor is she to be pitied. So far as she is concerned, her blindness is not even an affliction."

It was some time, however, before Vanderlyn recovered from his excitement, an excitement that puzzled William Wornum greatly and that continued to puzzle him for years afterwards, until upon a memorable occasion in the annals

of Rockville, the details of which will form the culmination of this hastily written chronicle, everything was made clear. It may be added here that the schoolmaster afterwards noted, his attention having been called to the fact by Tiny Padgett, the young poet to whom I have already alluded, that whenever Miss Nora went out into the village, as she often did, threading the streets as easily and with as much facility as though her eyesight was of the best, either Dan or his son Jack was sure to be near. The schoolmaster had good reason to be thankful that such was the case, for one day a few weeks subsequently, as he was sitting at Padgett's corner discussing politics with the veterans of the village, some one cried out: "Good God! Look yonder!"

William Wornum looked and saw Nora Perryman crossing the public square dangling a scarlet scarf upon her arm, while Lem Griffin's black cow, a vicious beast with a young calf, was charging down upon her. The schoolmaster, as, indeed, did all who witnessed the scene, leaped to his feet as though he would rush to the rescue, and then he turned his face away with such a feeling of grief and horror as he had never before experienced. Then he heard a shout along the street, and General Bledsoe, who was standing near, exclaimed with unwonted energy: "Damme, gentlemen, that's what I call grit and muscle."

When the schoolmaster took courage to look, he saw the cow stretched upon the ground with Vanderlyn sitting upon her neck, while Nora stood near, the very incarnation of beauty, laughing and talking with the hero of the hour. Those who had nerve enough to witness the affair say that Vanderlyn was some distance from the scene when the cow began her charge, but he ran like a deer and was just in time to jump in front of the blind girl and seize the animal by the horns. The struggle was a short one. He gave the cow's neck a sharp twist, and she went over as though she had been shot and lay there as quietly and as peacefully as a lamb. When the young lady was fairly out of the way, Vanderlyn astonished the spectators, who had gathered at a respectful distance, by turning the cow loose and taking the calf, an awkward, shaky thing, under his arm and marching out of town, while the mother, lately so ferocious, followed in a trot.

## IV

*Facing the Ladies*

As the schoolmaster opened the gate to enter Miss Jane Perryman's yard, the lovely vision on the porch turned and smiled upon him. She knew his footstep, and as he neared the porch she began to laugh right merrily, a ringing, infectious laugh, in which William Wornum joined heartily without exactly knowing why.

"We are having lots of fun all by ourselves, are we not?" said the schoolmaster in a bantering tone.

"O Mr. Wornum, they are all here," said the girl, still laughing—"the Pruitts, the Padgets, the Bagleys, and even Miss Underwood! They couldn't stand it. They've come to inquire about the new man. Do come in and help sister out."

"And so you are out looking for reënforcements?" It was a singular fact that none of Nora Perryman's friends ever thought of her blindness.

"O no! I just ran out here to rest my ears. They are going on at a terrible rate, and for once sister Jane is at her wit's end. Do come in."

Nora and the schoolmaster entered the cozy little sitting room together.

"Good morning to you, ladies," said William Wornum.

"Ah! here he is now," remarked Mrs. Bagley, dipping a stick toothbrush into a paper of snuff and transferring it to her mouth. "What do he look like, Mr. Wornum?"

"Yas," said Mrs. Pruitt, smiling coquettishly in order to show her false teeth, "we want to know what kind of a lookin' creetur he is. We axed Jane, but Jane vows she ain't seed him."

"May I ask the name of the individual you are inquiring after, ladies?" queried the schoolmaster with great apparent earnestness.

"What did you say his name was, Jane? Hit's some furrin' name—Linderman or Landerham."

"I said it was Vlandermin," said Miss Jane, "an' I said he wuzzent no great shakes, er he wouldn't 'a' come a-creepin' up on folks in a night like this."

"That's a fact," exclaimed the schoolmaster, glancing

around upon the ladies with an air of triumph. "That's a fact, by George! The fellow did creep up on us in a manner, didn't he? Why, I had forgotten that. The impudent wretch didn't even deign to write us a letter and tell us when he was coming and what he was going to do. I feel it my duty to investigate this matter."

It was one of the peculiarities of William Wornum's character that his acquaintances would have been shocked at the thought that he ever indulged in a joke, while his intimate friends never knew when he was in a serious mood. Perhaps Nora, the young girl, understood him best of all, and even her keen discrimination was sometimes utterly at a loss to distinguish between the schoolmaster's quaint and fantastic humor and his no less eccentric seriousness, and she was often puzzled at the queer shape and direction of his thought. She was not puzzled now, however, nor, for the matter, was Miss Jane, who had come to regard with suspicion everything the schoolmaster said. She understood perfectly well that he was ridiculing her, but she resented it only by a sniff of disdain.

"Whät did you say the creetur wuz name?" pursued Mrs. Pruitt.

"His name is Vanderlyn, madam, and it seems to be in this instance the synonym for villain. Do you really suppose, ladies," in a confidential tone, "that he has settled in Rockville without informing *anybody*?"

"Goodness me, William Wornum!" exclaimed Miss Jane. What else she may have said will never be known, for before she could finish her lecture Mrs. Bagley chimed in with her shrill treble: "I'll tell you what I know, Mr. Wornum, though mebbe hit ain't much. Soon's I heerd thar wuz a stranger set up in town I goes to John Bell, the stage driver, an' I sez: 'John,' sez I, 'who's this new man?' 'Which new man?' sez he. 'Why, this new man that's set up a shop thar nigh the old McHenry house,' sez I. 'Lord bless you, ma'am,' sez he, 'I don't know.' 'Did he have much baggidge?' sez I. 'Ef my name's John Bell, Mrs. Bagley,' sez he, 'them cattle o' mine ain't hauled no baggidge fer no new man; an' ef he come in my stage, ma'm,' sez he, 'he rid in the boot; an' ef he rid in the boot, I wouldn't like fer to w'ar his broozes.' Them's John

Bell's own words; an' ef he hadn't tole 'em outen his own mouth, I'd a scasely believed 'em. Now," continued Mrs. Bagley, lowering her voice to the inflection of mystery, "how you reckon that man got into town and fetch his baggidge?"

"I think Miss Jane's theory is the most plausible," said the schoolmaster. "It is evident he crept up on the community without giving the community fair warning. It is a very serious case."

Mrs. Padgett: "You ain't seen 'im, is you, Mr. Wornum?"

The schoolmaster: "Worse than that, madam. I have fraternized with him."

Mrs. Padgett: "O, you don't say!"

Mrs. Pruitt: "What did the poor creetur look like?"

The schoolmaster: "He is a very rough-looking customer. Like father, like son. Miss Jane saw the son, a ragged, dirty little vagrant, who seems to have a habit of roosting in chinaberry trees."

Mrs. Pruitt: "Is it possible?"

Miss Jane: "Don't you believe 'im, Sue. William Wornum, you're the outbeatinist man I ever see. That child is ez neat an' peart a lookin' boy ez you'd want to see, a mighty sight better lookin' than them ragamuffins what graddyate in that den of devilment what you call your 'cademy. It's mighty easy to talk about people you don't know. You don't have to ketch a frog on the jump to cripple it."

The schoolmaster (stroking his serious face thoughtfully): "I beg your pardon, Miss Jane. My recollection is that when you called me this morning you distinctly stated that a dirty little vagabond was perched in your china-berry tree."

Miss Jane (laughing in spite of herself): "Well, my old tom cat has to look twice before he ken tell whether he's a-ketchin' a mole er a mouse."

Enter Mrs. Dusenberry with a rush and a bounce: "Howdy, Jane; howdy, Mr. Wornum; howdy, all. I seen him! I jostled right up ag'in him in the street, an' I tell you he's a whopper, mighty nigh ez big as two men."

Miss Underwood: "Does he look like a ruffian, Mrs. Dusenberry?"

Mrs. Dusenberry: "Why, bless your heart, child, no! You don't see no handsomer man in these parts. Hair black ez a crow, shinin' beard, an' eyes ez mild ez a baby's. Bill O'Brien wuz walkin' 'longside er 'im, an' I wish I may die ef Bill didn't look like a runt."

Mrs. Pruitt (sticking to her original proposition): "Poor creetur!"

Mrs. Dusenberry (mistaking the direction of Mrs. Pruitt's sympathy): "Youer right, Ann; for ef ever anybody looked like a poor creetur it was Bill O'Brien when he wuz a-walkin' 'longside er that man."

To what further extent this interesting eulogy would have been carried it is impossible to say, for just at that moment there came a rap upon the door. Responding to the summons, the schoolmaster found Vanderlyn and his son upon the porch. The former had put on his coat and brushed himself up generally and was altogether, as William Wornum thought, quite a fine-looking man.

"I jes' drapped in, squire," he said, smiling in an apologetic way, "to see the lady o' the house."

"Certainly," said the schoolmaster. "Come in. Come in, Jack."

Showing them into the parlor, Mr. Wornum reported to Miss Jane the fact that Mr. Vanderlyn had called to see her.

"Well, what in the name o' goodness the man wants with me, I don't know," said Miss Jane, taking a pinch of snuff and smoothing out her apron preparatory to giving audience to Vanderlyn.

"Have 'im in here, Jane," said Mrs. Bagley eagerly.

"Gracious, yes! O, by all means!" exclaimed Mrs. Pruitt. "We want to see what the creetur's like. Ax 'im in, Mr. Wornum."

This proposition fitted the queer humor of the schoolmaster so thoroughly that he did not wait for Miss Jane to decide the matter. He went back to Vanderlyn and invited him into the sitting room.

"You will meet some ladies there," said the schoolmaster by way of warning; "some of Miss Perryman's particular friends."



"All right, squire. I ain't particular fond of the fa'r sek, but I'm lookin' arter bizness now. Shove ahead."

And the schoolmaster did "shove ahead," leading Vanderlyn and Jack into the august presence of the principal gossips of the village and introducing him in the most formal manner. Miss Kate Underwood, of Vermont, spinster, aged about twenty-six, was inclined to be facetious; but when she happened to glance at Vanderlyn and found his mild eyes resting calmly upon her, she colored up like a schoolgirl, this strong-minded damsel, and her eyes dropped in visible embarrassment, an embarrassment from which she did not fully recover while the stranger remained in the room. The fair Katherine was of the opinion that her confusion was not observed by the others, but in this she was mistaken, for Mrs. Pruitt never alluded to her first meeting with Vanderlyn without remarking: "An' you oughter seed 'im take down that Kate Underwood! She wuz a-snickerin' an' a-gigglin', and he jes' turned roun' an' give her one look. It wuz better than a show. I never wuz so glad of ennything in all my borned days—a-goin' roun' here settin' up fer a gal when she's forty year old ef she's a day."

Women as a rule are fair judges of men; and as Vanderlyn sat in the presence of the company that had assembled in Miss Perryman's sitting room, cool, calm, and unembarrassed, smiling and showing his white teeth, they all thought they had never seen a finer specimen of manhood. So well proportioned was the stranger that none of them noticed that he was compelled to stoop to enter the door. He was altogether a remarkable-looking man, with his big frame, his fine features, and his black hair and beard and blue eyes.

"We were just discussing you, Mr. Vanderlyn," said the schoolmaster—"that is to say," with malicious deliberation, "the ladies here were."

Vanderlyn looked at his son and laughed, as much as to say, "You hear that, Jack?" while the ladies protested with great vehemence that Mr. Wornum was grossly misrepresenting them.

"I appeal to Miss Nora," said the schoolmaster.

"I must say," responded the girl with a little rippling

laugh, "that Mr. Vanderlyn's name was mentioned, and we were wondering where he came from and all about him and his little boy. I am sure there was no harm in that."

"None, ladies, none whatsoever," said Vanderlyn in a voice so gentle that it startled those who heard it. Mrs. Bagley went so far as to say that it sounded like a flute, and Miss Kate Underwood afterwards told Becky Griggs, her oldest pupil, that she felt like crying. "No, lady," he continued as gently as before, "me and Jack oughter feel thankful that such as you and these ladies is kind enough to think of us at all."

Nothing was said by any of the ladies in response to this, even the schoolmaster holding his humor in abeyance. Miss Jane, looking out of the window, appeared to be watching the riotous caperings of a colt in Judge Walthall's barley patch. Mrs. Pruitt took a ball of yarn and a half-finished stocking from her pocket and began to knit industriously. Mrs. Bagley studied her paper of snuff intently, and Mrs. Dusenberry picked imaginary ravelings from the corner of her shawl, while Kate Underwood kept her eyes fixed steadily on the floor.

"You may say," pursued Vanderlyn, smiling slightly, "that me and Jack come through the country. We've traipsed aroun' considerably, ain't we, Jack?"

"Goodness, yes, but didn't we have fun though?"

"Oceans uv it, jes' oceans uv it. You see, I wuz a-huntin' fer a party, an' I've been a-huntin' 'im mighty nigh eight years. I owe 'im a debt," he continued in an explanatory way, "an' I wanter pay 'im. But I seen this traipsing bizness didn't help Jack much, an' I sez to myself, sez I, 'Look a here, ole man, while youer huntin' fer your party, whatter you doin' fer that boy?' Sez I, 'You've gotter send that boy to school; an' ef you send 'im to school, you've gotter settle down.' And," drawing a long breath, "I've settled. Ez fer bizness, I ain't pinin' arter customers. I ain't ableedzd to have 'em. I've laid away a little money fer me an' Jack, an' ef people don't want the'r guns mended, hit won't hurt my feelin's."

"What you think?" said Jack, laughing. "Sometimes when we'd be goin' 'long he'd wanter tote me,"

"An' you think he'd let me?" exclaimed Vanderlyn in an aggrieved voice.

"Why, goodness me," said Jack, "when a feller gits tired, he oughter set down an' rest!"

"Didn't I tell you, squire," said Vanderlyn, turning to the schoolmaster and speaking in a confidential tone, "didn't I tell you he wuz a regular buster?"

The schoolmaster admitted that he did and took great pleasure, as he said, in coinciding in the opinion that Jack was a buster.

"I come over, Miss Perryman," said Vanderlyn, "fer to see ef you wouldn't take Jack an' board 'im. He wouldn't be no more trouble than ef he wuzzent in the house, an', more than that, hit's about time fer some lady to take 'im in han' an' sorter civilize 'im. Jack said this mornin' it looked mighty like home over here. Didn't you, Jack?"

"I said," replied Jack, blushing and looking embarrassed for the first time, "that when I dreamed of mother she allers looked at me like Miss Jane did when I clomb down outer the tree."

Miss Jane colored a little, took a pinch of snuff, and exclaimed somewhat snappishly: "Why, of course I'll take the chile! Why shouldn't I? He'll be no trouble ter me; an' ef he gets too obstrepalous, I'll use my shoe on 'im."

"Lor', Miss Perryman," said Vanderlyn, "you'll admire to see how that boy will mine you. Whatever you tell 'im to do, ef it kin be done, he'll do it. He's got mischief into 'im, but he ain't got no meanness."

"I'm takin' 'im on my own judgment," said Miss Jane with some asperity.

V

*Our Marionettes*

It is not-possible that the reader has formed more than a vague idea of the characteristics of William Wornum, the schoolmaster. I have said that he was eccentric; I should have said that people called him eccentric, people who did not know him well. He had traveled a great deal and was possessed of an ample competency, and yet he chose to shut himself up in a schoolroom day after day with thirty or more riotous urchins. He was the owner

of a large plantation, the most fertile probably in the whole country, and it was in charge of an overseer who was not only kind to the negroes, but was one of the most progressive and intelligent agriculturists of that day. His crops of cotton and corn were something wonderful, and they brought to the schoolmaster an ample income. Knowing all this, some of the inhabitants of Rockville called him eccentric, while others said he was not only eccentric, but miserly. When gossip of this sort was brought to his ears by Miss Jane, who was his most earnest champion, he would smile and say nothing. He was too indifferent to public opinion even to have a contempt for it. He went little into society, though he was somewhat socially inclined at times and was a most charming conversationalist. He made no effort to make himself popular with the many, and he had but few intimate friends. To those few, however, his quaint humor and queer conceits were a perpetual well-spring of pleasure. He taught school because the indolence of plantation life did not fit his restlessness and because, moreover, he was really interested in the study of the unadulterated human nature to be found in boys. It was for this reason, and this alone, that he so readily consented to take Jack Vanderlyn in hand. He thought he discovered in the boy a peculiar freshness and brightness not often seen in children, and he at once became interested. For the rest, the schoolmaster was tall and slim, with a slight stoop in the shoulders. His face was so thoughtful and intellectual as to have the appearance of sadness, and he had dark hair, large, brilliant black eyes, and rather a large mouth. In him the ease and the repose of a man of the world seemed to be combined in a singular manner with the shyness and reserve of the scholar. His humor, which had something of the flavor of that of Sir Thomas Browne about it, sometimes took the shape of sarcasm, but never drifted in the direction of cynicism. He made a great pretense of being serious over trifles and of treating important matters with careless indifference. He was well advanced in the thirties, but said he was forty, on the ground that it was as consistent for an unmarried man to be forty years old as to be thirty-seven. He was most satirical of people and things and the benefactor

of all who needed charity. Above all, he was generous to his negroes. They were well clothed, well fed, and had comfortable quarters. I do not mention this as an exception. Scarcely one planter in one hundred treated his negroes cruelly, and that one was compelled to face the open scorn and contempt of the ninety-nine. It was not a crime in the eyes of the law for a master to treat his slave cruelly; but the old plantation had a code of its own and cruelty to a negro was almost invariably followed by social isolation, and in those times no punishment could be severer. I have mentioned this trait in the character of William Wornum because the careful and scrupulous manner in which he watched over his negroes was the subject of remark among his neighbors. Upon one occasion he employed a man by the name of Raddick, who came well recommended, to manage his plantation. A few weeks afterwards, while making his regular weekly visit to his place, Wornum called for Plato, a venerable old negro, who, by reason of his age, experience, and faithfulness, was the confidential adviser of his master in matters relating to the management of the crops and the necessities of the negroes. When the old man, still hale and hearty, but with hair as white as snow, came up, hat in hand, his master observed a scar across his face.

"How did you hurt yourself, Plato?" asked William Wornum.

"I didn't hurt myse'f, Marse Willium. I wuz hurted."

"Who hurt you?"

"Mr. Raddick."

"How?"

"He fetched me a lick wid his ridin' w'ip."

"Send Elleck after Mr. Raddick and go to your house. When I want you, I'll call you."

Raddick came up in a great hurry apparently and was very effusive in his manner: "Why, lordy, Kurnel, howdy! Ef I'd 'a' know'd you's a-comin', Kurnel, I'd 'a' been here befo'. Did you wanter see me, Kurnel?"

"I believe we have a contract for the year."

"Yes, Kurnel."

"Come to Rockville to-morrow, and I will pay you your

year's salary. I want you to quit my place immediately."

"But, Kurnel"—

"If we argue over the matter, Mr. Raddick, I shall lose my temper. I don't want you on my place, and that is enough."

That was the end of Raddick's career as an overseer in that section. The fact leaked out in some way that William Wornum had paid him an entire year's salary rather than keep him, and he found it impossible to obtain employment. Plato, relating the affair to his fellow servants sometime after, said: "I nuss'd Marse William f'um a baby up, an' I ain't never seen 'im dat mad befo'. He wuz a-whoopin', sho's you born."

Another peculiarity of the schoolmaster was his sensitiveness. In his youth it almost amounted to an affliction, but he was accustomed to hide it by an assumed carelessness that did not commend him to strangers. "Have many acquaintances, but few friends," he was accustomed to say at times, or "The people of the East have a habit of inspecting their figs before eating them." His most intimate friends were Miss Jane Perryman and her sister Nora, Judge Walthall, who had been a member of Congress and who was the largest planter in the country, Emory Reed, a brilliant young lawyer, and Miss Kate Underwood. He was attracted to Miss Jane by the sharpness of her wit and her uncompromising method of dealing with the foibles of friends and foes and the aptness of her illustrations. He had long ago discovered what a warm and kindly nature lay beneath the cloak of asperity which Miss Jane chose to wear, and she with the shrewdness of her sex had taken the full measure of the schoolmaster and caught more than one glimpse of his noble purposes and pure soul. "The porcupine furnishes a tender steak," he was wont to remark when defending Miss Jane from the good-humored attacks of her friends, and she had said to him: "The biggest fiddle don't make the most music by a long shot."

Miss Jane was not compelled to take boarders. She owned a family of seven sleek, fat negroes, headed by Uncle Ben and Aunt Ferraby. The two latter she kept with her, but the five boys—stout, healthy fellows, ranging

from fifteen to twenty-two—she hired out, allowing them the privilege of choosing their own employers. Uncle Ben was quite a character in his way and quite a favorite with the young men, who enjoyed his odd sayings and admired his politeness, which would have done honor to one of the old Virginia barons. He was also a famous hunter of the raccoon and opossum, and there are few who lived in Rockville even as late as 1858 who do not have a lively recollection of Uncle Ben's "possum suppers."

Miss Jane was quite comfortably off, so far as this world's goods were concerned; but when William Wornum, whom she had long known, asked her to allow him to make one of her little family, she readily consented, with the characteristic remark: "Wimmen is poor creeturs, ennyhow. They're miserable ef they ain't got a man in the house an' miserable ef they have. Tinkins [her pet cat] is gittin' too ole ter be enny pertection, an' I b'leeve in my soul ef a buggler wuz to break in I wouldn't have strength to holler for Ben."

And so the schoolmaster took up his quarters in the little cottage. Nora had just returned from Philadelphia, where she had been at school, and William Wornum was surprised that one destitute of sight could be taught so many accomplishments. Indeed, it was always a question with him whether she had been taught. She seemed to learn by intuition: Her memory was something wonderful, while her hearing and her sense of touch were most exquisitely developed. As the schoolmaster said, her blindness was by no means an affliction. Her large gray eyes were as clear and as limpid as though their vision was unimpaired, and but for the introspective expression they always wore—as of one in deep thought who looks at you fixedly and yet does not seem to see you—strangers would have learned of her blindness with astonishment. The schoolmaster was at first disposed to deplore what he considered an affliction, but later he ceased to remember that she was blind. Upon one occasion, when she and William Wornum were sitting on the porch together, the conversation turned upon her blindness, and she said: "If a miracle could be performed and I could be made to see, I think I should be in perpetual confusion. I cannot understand how it is pos-

sible for people to look and listen at the same time. I should probably think less of my friends if I could see their faces."

"No doubt," said the schoolmaster with a sigh. "Some of them are homely enough, Heaven knows."

"O, I didn't mean that," the young girl hastened to reply. "I meant that I might discover that their faces contradicted their kind words. I should delight in homely faces like sister Jane's. I imagine I see their faces, and that is enough for me."

"Would you mind describing me?" said the schoolmaster.

"O, that is absurd, Mr. Wornum. Of course I know how you look. You are tall, with large eyes and dark hair; and although you make others laugh, you rarely smile yourself. Sometimes you are really troubled about something, but I cannot see what it is," she said gently.

"Trouble is a frequent visitor to us all," he said aloud; but to himself he said: "Ah, child, if you only knew!"

"But your troubles must be little ones," she said.

"Yes," he responded in a low tone. "They are scarcely worth speaking about."

"I cannot see the rose and the violet as you see them," the young girl went on; "but sometimes it seems to me that I can see their perfume. I hear sounds and enjoy the fragrance of flowers far better than if I had eyesight to confuse me."

"You cannot see the stars," said the professor, happening to catch a glimpse of Sirius burning and blazing in the east.

"No," she said, smiling just a little; "but I can comprehend what is meant by the infinity of space, and this would be impossible if I could see the thousand and one small things visible to the eye and have my thoughts bounded by the narrow limits of vision. When you speak of the infinity of space, you use the words without understanding their meaning. To me they convey an idea as vivid and as real as my own existence, because I have an experience, a fact, with which I can compare it, and that fact is the boundless darkness by which I am surrounded. If you should endeavor to describe light to me, I would fail to understand you."

"You have given me a problem," said the schoolmaster.



## VI

*The Freaks of Daniel Vanderlyn*

William Wornum took charge of Rockville Academy as the successor of one Thomas McManus, a thoroughly proficient teacher, but a very cruel and overbearing man. He used the rod to such an extent that his pupils were thoroughly demoralized; and he had a habit, which was quite common among the instructors of youth of those days, of showing a decided partiality for the sons of his wealthier patrons. It is more than probable, however, that the man thought he was adding to his supply of meat and bread by such a course. All this was changed by William Wornum. He began by introducing the discipline of kindness and strict impartiality. Above all, he never lost patience with a dull pupil. The boys were astonished and then skeptical, but they gradually fell in with the reforms of the new teacher; and in a short time, in spite of Miss Jane's criticisms, which I have already quoted, the discipline of the school was well-nigh perfect. The rod was laid away, and kindness ruled in its stead. The least tractable boys received the most attention from the schoolmaster, and the ambition of the dullest was aroused by the competitive examinations that occurred twice a week. It was altogether a model school, and people sent their children from long distances in order that their mental training might be directed by William Wornum.

Jack Vanderlyn's lines were, therefore, cast in pleasant places. The schoolmaster found him not only apt and bright, but well advanced for a boy of seven. He could read well, and he never tired of study. He never neglected his books for play nor his play for books. One day, shortly after the boy entered the academy, the schoolmaster heard a rapping upon the wall near the door. It was Daniel Vanderlyn.

"Good morning, Mr. Vanderlyn," said William Wornum. "Come in and see my young men."

"I jes' thought I'd drap in an' see how the boys wuz a-gittin' 'long," the giant remarked in an apologetic tone.

"Certainly. Come in. Jack's class is just about to recite. You are just in time."

"Well, I be blame, schoolmaster, ef I don't believe I'll sorter linger round out here till arter Jack gits through. I'm feared I'd kinder ruffle the boy's feelin's an' make 'im stumble."

He went in, however, after some persuasion, and from that time forward not a school day passed that Vanderlyn did not put in an appearance at the academy. He soon became a great favorite with the boys, who called him "Jack's giant killer." He joined in their games with a zest that afforded a fresh subject of study for the schoolmaster. He played horse for the smaller ones, frequently carrying two on his shoulders; he made swings and built a gymnasium, and he taught the larger boys how to handle a bat and catch a ball. In fine, it came to pass that Vanderlyn was quite an important adjunct to the school. Hearing of all this, some of the parents of the boys concluded that the man was a lunatic; and one or two of them, Mr. Bagley among the number, protested to the schoolmaster that such "carryings on" were hurtful to the dignity of the school. William Wornum laughed at these protests, but at the same time gave the dissatisfied parents to understand that he was managing his school to suit himself.

An incident occurred shortly after this that rather turned the tide of popular opinion in Rockville in favor of Vanderlyn. Judge Walthall had recently purchased a pair of horses for his phaëton, the first vehicle of the kind ever seen in Rockville. The horses were as pretty as a picture, black as jet and wonderfully stylish in their appearance. John Bell and other judges of horse flesh gave it as their opinion that they were thoroughbreds, while the admiration of the female portion of the community was content to pause in contemplation of the silver-mounted harness and the shining vehicle.

One Sunday afternoon the schoolmaster was standing talking to Vanderlyn in front of the latter's shop. The group of two had been reënforced by Mr. Bagley and John Bell.

"I reckon we'll have some rain to-morrow," remarked Mr. Bagley. "I seen it lightning in the north just now."

"Yes," said Vanderlyn, "an' thar's a raincrow a-hollerin' hisself hoarse in that oak over thar."

"'Twouldn't s'prise me ef we didn't have some fallin' weather 'fore the week's out," said John Bell. "When I crossed Lick Creek this mornin', a powerful fog wuz hangin' roun'."

"And the tree frogs are growing clamorous," remarked the schoolmaster.

"O, dad blame the tree frogs!" exclaimed Mr. Bagley. "They're— Hello! what's that?"

There was a tremendous rattling up the street, mingled with what appeared to be the screams of women. The little group standing there discussing the weather were not left long in suspense. In another moment Judge Walthall's phaëton swung around the courthouse corner and came thundering toward them. There appeared to be several ladies in the vehicle, and one was making ineffectual efforts to wrench the door open.

"Look at the damn nigger!" exclaimed Vanderlyn. Jim, the driver, was plainly demoralized. He seemed to be making small effort to control the horses, though, for that matter, they appeared to be beyond human control.

"Ef the devil ain't to pay now, I'm a Dutchman," said John Bell.

Vanderlyn walked out into the street and stood as if he would confront the rushing animals.

"Get out of the way!" exclaimed the schoolmaster; but Vanderlyn sood like a statue.

"Pull on that lead horse, Jim!" he exclaimed as the phaëton neared him, and his voice rang out like a trumpet. Then he made a spring, caught the off horse by the bridle, was dragged a little distance, regained his feet, and swung to the animal's head with such marvelous strength that, after a few desperate lunges, both horses were brought to a standstill. Fortunately, the negro driver had comprehended Vanderlyn's order and carried it out to the letter, else it is possible there would have been no excuse for afflicting the reader with the details of this chronicle.

By the time the horses were brought to a halt John Bell and Mr. Bagley had reached their heads, and in a few moments Judge Walthall came running up, nearly frantic with fright. The phaëton contained his wife and his daughter Lucy, and with them were Miss Kate Underwood and

Becky Griggs. The Judge went up to Vanderlyn with the tears rolling down his cheeks and took the gunmaker's hand in his, unable for the moment to speak. Vanderlyn was visibly embarrassed. The tears of the old man confused him.

"That's a right peart pair er hosses, Jedge," he said and then, after a little, "an' a mighty tough waggin."

"Mr. Vanderlyn," Judge Walthall said presently in a broken voice, "whatever I have is yours. You have done more for me and mine this day than I could do for you were I to remain your servant a thousand years."

"Don't mine me, Jedge," said Vanderlyn, laughing a little to hide his confusion. "Ef it hadn't 'a' bin fer Jim thar, that off horse 'ud er drug me outer town."

"'Twuzzent me, marster. I wuz too skeered fer ter pull much. I ain't never see nobody ketch er hoss like dat; an' ef Marse Dan hadn't er kotch 'em, de killin' place would er bin right down yan at de big gully. We'd never crossed dat bridge wid bref in us. I knowed dat w'en dey turn' roun' de cote'ouse cornder."

By this time the ladies had been assisted out by the schoolmaster, and Vanderlyn's embarrassment was heightened by their thanks. He took occasion to observe that they were all frightened and trembling, with the exception of Miss Underwood, who was quite calm and self-possessed. She noticed that whenever Vanderlyn wiped the perspiration from his face with his hand he left a trace of blood.

"You have hurt yourself, Mr. Vanderlyn," she said. "Take my handkerchief," offering him what he took to be a piece of lace.

"'Tain't nothing but the scratch of a tongue buckle," he said, refusing the handkerchief. Then he turned to the driver: "What skeered these hosses, Jim?"

"Nothin' never skeered um, Marse Dan. Dey des got the ole boy in um. W'en we wuz comin' 'long by Marse Ab Stone's, dat off hoss back 'is years an' shake 'is head, an' de udder one look like he say 'All right,' and den dey fa'rly tore de groun' up."

"Jedge," said Vanderlyn, turning to Judge Walthall, "kin I borry these animals 'bout half hour?"

"Certainly, Mr. Vanderlyn, but you are not going to attempt to drive them now?"

"I'm a-gwine to see ef I can't sorter tame 'em down like. Jack, run an' fetch my whip."

"I tell you what, ole man," said John Bell, who, with Mr. Bagley, was standing at the heads of the still restive horses, "ef you mount that box, you'll git sick of it. I'm handlin' squally hosses every day in the year, but you wouldn't ketch me pullin' the lines over this team right now. They've got Satan in 'em."

"I'll try 'em one roun', ennyhow, jes' to see how they pull," replied Vanderlyn as Jack returned with a heavy wagoner's whip. Loosening the checkreins, Vanderlyn gathered up the lines and mounted the box. "Now, gents," he said to Bagley and Bell when he had settled himself firmly in the seat, "now, gents, you kin give 'em all the room they want."

Bell and Bagley jumped aside, and the horses made a plunge forward. At the same instant the lash of the heavy whip flew into the air and descended upon one of the animals with a report like that of a pistol. This was the signal for the inauguration of a desperate struggle between the man and the horses. The plunges of the animals were something prodigious, and every time they plunged the spectators could hear the report of the whip as it fell mercilessly first to the right and then to the left. The ladies, the schoolmaster, Judge Walthall, and the others looked on in amazement.

"Dang my buttons ef he ain't natally holdin' 'em down on the yearth!" exclaimed John Bell, who considered himself the best horseman in all that section.

"And he doesn't seem to be hurting himself much, either," remarked the schoolmaster.

As long as the horses continued the plunging the whip continued to descend; but as they turned up a back street those who were watching saw that they had settled down into a smooth and steady run. It was also observable that they were held well in hand. In a few minutes the team turned the corner of the courthouse, where they had first been seen by Mr. Bagley and those who were talking with him. They had subsided from a run into a gallop, and

they came down the street easily and steadily, until they drew up alongside the little group they had left a few minutes before.

"Now, ladies," said Vanderlyn, "ef you wanten finish your ride, all you gotter do is to let Jim clime up here and take you roun'. Ain't no tamer horses'n these. I 'low'd I wuz gwineter have a big fight wi' 'em, but, my goodness! they came down to bizness jes' like lam's. They're right lively cattle, Jedge, but they ain't got no harm in 'em. Nothin' but fun."

"I wouldn't dare to ride unless you held the reins, Mr. Vanderlyn," said the fair Katherine Underwood, a faint color showing itself in her face.

"Why, certain," exclaimed Vanderlyn. "Open that door, Jim. Mr. Wornum, help the ladies in."

There was no more fright on the part of the ladies. With Vanderlyn upon the box after his little exploit of stopping the runaway horses, to think of danger would have been absurd, and they all seated themselves in the vehicle once more.

"William," said Judge Walthall to the schoolmaster as the phaeton was driven off, "who is this man Vanderlyn?"

"There is his history, Judge, as far as I know it," replied the schoolmaster, pointing to the swinging sign, which bore upon its face the commonplace legend, "D. Vanderlyn, Gunmaker."

"He seems to be a remarkable person," said the Judge.

"Altogether, I should say that he is the most remarkable man I ever met," said the schoolmaster. "I have been thrown with him nearly every day for several weeks, and I must say that I have never seen any one quite so attractive. He is uncouth in his talk and sometimes in his manner, but after a little while one forgets all these things. He is as simple as a child, as gentle and tender as a woman, and yet he is a marvelous specimen of manhood. He has a way of his own, and I should imagine that it would be dangerous to trifle with him."

"I must see more of him," said the Judge heartily.

"He is worth cultivating," said the schoolmaster. "He is one of the originals, and he has the brightest boy I have ever seen. For the purpose of studying human nature I

wouldn't give Dan Vanderlyn and his son for a whole city full of people. There's the boy now. 'Jack,'" he called, and then the boy came up with a smile on his frank face. "This is Judge Walthall, Jack."

The Judge seemed to take great interest in the child. He was impressed, as most people were, with the bright, intelligent face and the unaffected frankness of the boy and talked to him for some time.

"Now, I'll tell you what I want you to do," said the Judge, passing his hand caressingly through Jack's curly hair. "To-morrow after church I want you to come over to my house and bring your father and Mr. Wornum. Will you come?"

"If Dan says so."

## VII

### *Miss Jane Delivers a Lecture*

"This world's full er funny people," remarked Miss Jane blandly as she and Nora and the schoolmaster sat in the porch that evening of the day of Vanderlyn's exploit with Judge Walthall's horses. "It's full er funny people; an' the more you live, the more you fine it out. They cut up their rippits right befo' folks' eyes, more spesherly the men. Everything the men does the wimmen gotter to make a great miration over it. Ef they don't git together and gabble over it like a passel of puddle ducks, then the men gits slighted, and thar ain't no end to the tribulation."

"This is something new," the schoolmaster began.

"No, it ain't, William Wornum, and mighty well you know it. It's been so sense Adam cut up his capers in the yardins of Eden, an' it'll be so tell Gaber'el blows his horn."

"It is new to me, at any rate," the schoolmaster remarked, blowing a cloud of smoke in the direction of the moon, that seemed to float in a sea of fleecy clouds in the east, and wondering whether it would ever reach its destination. "Do you mean to say that men are really so anxious to receive the applause of women that they form themselves into small mobs and compel the weaker sex to sound their praises?"

"It's mighty nigh got to that," responded Miss Jane.

"It is curious, though," said the schoolmaster, "how far a man will go to merit the approval of women. In the old days men were in the habit of hewing and hacking each other to pieces in the face of the multitude merely for the purpose of crowning some fair lady queen of love and beauty. But there is neither hewing nor hacking in these times."

"Lord knows, William Wornum, they didn't mangle one another fer the sake er the wimmen. It wuz the'r vanity a-bilin' in 'em. Look at Emory Reed, a-primpin', a-perfumin' hisself. He never darkens this door that I don't expect to hear 'im holler out: 'Look at me, folks. Ain't I a purty pink?'"

The schoolmaster laughed. "You must excuse Emory, Miss Jane. He is in love."

"Well, mercy knows, I'd hate to set my cap fer 'im! I'd be afeard he wouldn't w'ar well. Silk gloves don't cure bone felons."

"Who is Mr. Reed in love with, Mr. Wornum?" queried Nora.

"I am afraid to give the young lady's name," said the schoolmaster rather coldly. "But she is quite worthy of him."

"She is a good woman, then," said the blind girl.

"Young foxes," remarked Miss Jane pointedly, "don't know the difference between a spring pullet and a settin' hen."

"Does Miss Nora stand for the fox, or is it young Reed?" asked the schoolmaster.

"I call no names," replied Miss Jane.

"O, I'm the fox, you may be sure," said Nora, laughing gayly. "I am the young fox, and sister is the old fox."

"Fo'ks run well when the'r shoes fit 'em," was the sententious comment of Miss Jane.

There was silence for a little while, but William Wornum's landlady was not satisfied with the abrupt turn that the conversation had taken.

"It ain't only the slick-lookin' men that wanter show themselves off," continued Miss Jane. "Thar's that Dan Vanderlyn. I wish I may die ef he wuzzent the impi-



dentest-lookin' man when he come back a-drivin' that carry-all er Judge Walthall's that I ever laid eyes on."

"His appearance was somewhat deceitful then. A more embarrassed man I have never seen. His confusion was unaccountable."

"I seen 'im," persisted Miss Jane; "an' ef he wa'n't as proud as a jay bird with six eggs in 'is nest, then I ain't no judge er human natur."

"He had a right to be proud," said Nora.

"No," remarked the schoolmaster; "he ought to be thankful that the horses didn't trample upon him. He ought to be thankful that two or three doctors are not at this moment setting his bones and sawing off his limbs, hewing and hacking him where there would be no multitude to witness the courage with which he faced the surgeons' knives."

"An' that ain't all," Miss Jane continued, evidently unimpressed by the schoolmaster's comparisons; "that ain't all. He's been totin' pervisions out here to ole 'Cajy Cooper. No longer'n day before yistiddy he h'isted up an' took a sack er flour an' a middlin' er meat out thar."

"Some people call that charity," the schoolmaster said.

"A hen that lays in another hen's nest don't hatch menny chickens, I reckon," was Miss Jane's comment. She always vanquished her opponents with her homely axioms.

"But the chickens are hatched and well taken care of for all that," said William Wornum.

"An' what sorter charity is that that lets ev'rybody know what it's a-doin'?" Miss Jane continued.

"Vanderlyin didn't mention the matter to me," said the schoolmaster.

"No. But didn't he buy the vittles at Padgett's, an' didn't he know that Sue Padgett 'ud spread it all over the county?"

"I dare say he wouldn't know Mrs. Padgett if he were to meet her on the street. But for the sake of poor 'Cajy Cooper it is to be hoped that Mrs. Padgett's activity will neither spoil the meat nor make the flour musty."

"It takes a hot day to spile a beggar's meat," was Miss Jane's comment.

"And a longer and a sharper tongue than Mrs. Padgett's

to make my friend Vanderlyn's charity ungracious. Now, here's Uncle Ben [as the old negro entered the gate]; we'll see what he says about it. Come here, Uncle Ben, and sit down on the steps. I want to get your opinion."

Uncle Ben came up, hat in hand. "Howdy, Mistiss; howdy, Miss No'a; howdy, Marse Willium."

"Uncle Ben," said the schoolmaster, "I want your opinion on a very important matter."

"Lor', honey! W'at sorter 'pinyun de ole nigger gwineter give w'ite folks?"

"The question is this, Uncle Ben: Suppose you are sick and suffering for something to eat, and I send you a sack of flour and a middling of meat. Mrs. So-and-So finds it out by some means and runs and tells her neighbors, and her neighbors come to the conclusion that I send you the provisions merely because I want to be looked upon as a kind-hearted man. I want your opinion of the matter."

"Iz de vittles sent to me, Marse Willium?"

"Yes."

"An' I gits it all safe an' soun'?"

"Yes."

"An' I'm lyin' dar fa'ly honein' arter a mou'ful?"

"Yes."

"Well, I tell you dis, Marse Willium: Dat vittles is gwineter do me a nation sight mo' good dan de talk's gwineter do you harm. Leas'ways, dat's my 'pinyun, an' I feel mighty good to'rds you, Marse Willium, dough de folks talked tell der tongue drapped out. Ef it ain't in de naberhood er char'ty fer ter greaze a hongry man's mouf, den de folks w'at I hear 'splainin' de Bible done gone an' got it wrong eend foremost."

"Uncle Ben's analysis is superior to yours or mine," said the schoolmaster to Miss Jane.

"O, Ben's got more gab than a jay bird," said his mistress. "When he ain't eatin', he's a-talkin'; an' when he ain't talkin', he's eatin'. I stood an' looked at him Monday mornin' a mortal hour, an' thar wuzzent a minit that he wan't talkin' to hisself right out loud an' gigglin'. You oughter heern 'im a-giggin'."

Uncle Ben scratched his head and laughed in a confused manner.

"Lordy, Mistiss," he said presently, "you wouldn't go on dat way ef you knowed who I wuz a-chattin' wid. I see sights, mon. I sees sights wa't nobody else don't see."

"An' you can't wak' up no hour er the night," Miss Jane continued as persistently as before, "that you don't hear Ben. Sometimes he's a-singin', an' sometimes he's a-quarrelin' with Feraby, an' sometimes he's a-disputin' with the wind."

"I'm gwine 'way fum here," exclaimed the old darky, laughing. "You-all makin' it too hot fer me."

"Where've you been to-day? Loafin' roun' Floyd's?" Miss Jane asked.

"Lordy, Mistiss, youse a sight! I ain't had but one dram dis blessed day, an' Miss Padgett gimme dat. I bin over dare gyard'nin'. She's a mighty stirrin' w'ite woman, Miss Padgett is. She ax'd me ef we-all didn't have a mess of English peas las' Chuseday an' up and said dat ef we did Miss didn't save me none er de pot licker, an' den she sed we wuz sech smart folks over here dat she 'lowed we had ripe peas."

This aroused Miss Jane's ire, as the shrewd old negro knew it would. "It 'ud pay some people ef they's keep the'r nose outer other folks' bizness. Who ast Sue Padgett to come a-stickin' her nose in my cupboard, I'd like to know."

"I dunno'm," replied Uncle Ben innocently; "but dat w'at she sed. I toler dat I 'speck we'd have um ripe 'fo' de mont' wuz out, an' den I reckon you'd sen' er some."

The schoolmaster was greatly amused at the tactics employed by Uncle Ben to exasperate his mistress.

"I'll see her stiff fust," exclaimed Miss Jane. "An' who ast you to be givin' 'way my vegetables to other people?"

"Goodness, Mistiss, I ain't give none 'way! I des 'low'd dat you mout sen' 'er sumpin' fresh, fer hit'll be a mighty long time 'fo' she gits hit outen her gyardin'."

"Well, ef you wanten give any green truck away, you pull it outer your own patch."

"I'm gwine. I ain't got no time fer to be settin' roun' here wid Mistiss scoldin' me 'bout Miss Padgett."

"Yes," said Miss Jane as though she were describing Uncle Ben to a stranger, "he'll go in that kitchen, and the

fast thing you know you'll hear the heat a-sizzin' an' a-fryin', an' yit the cold vittles that Feraby took out this very day oughter last a week."

Uncle Ben made haste to get away, and in a few minutes the occupants of the porch heard him singing a hymn, giving out the words to himself in a most sonorous voice and then intoning them in a style peculiar to the negro.

"A body 'ud believe," said Miss Jane after a little pause, "that Ben wuz a-goin' right to glory, an' yit he'll go up yonder to Floyd's grocery an' tote water all day fer a pint er lickin'."

"It is very strange," remarked the schoolmaster as though he had been pursuing an independent train of thought, "how people will let their tongues run. There is Mrs. Padgett, for instance"—

"You may well say that, William Wornum," responded Miss Jane with unction.

"It would scarcely be right to blame her for talking about Vanderlyn; but when she goes so far as to inquire what people have for dinner, it is about time to examine into the condition of the country."

"Well, Vanderlyn kin gitter 'long independent er her, I reckon."

"O, there's no objection to her talking. A little gossip well seasoned now and then is far more effective than a sermon, provided the sermon be a poor one. Tattling, whether it be idle or malicious, always conveys its own moral. Talking about one's neighbors is an exceedingly light-and-air occupation. It ought to be classed among the professions. Give me a tin box full of snuff and three women who are unhappy when they are compelled to remain at home, and I'll insure any reflective person an exceedingly pleasant time. The entertainment will consist of farce, comedy, and tragedy, all in a shape so mild that no serious effects will ensue."

"I am not so sure of that," said Nora, laughing. "You are rarely here, Mr. Wornum, when your society meets. [He had called it the Society for the Dissemination of Important Intelligence.] When Mrs. Pruitt and Mrs. Dusenberry and Mrs. Bagley come over for an afternoon, I often wish you could be here. You lose a great deal."

"I propose to join the society," said the schoolmaster. "The time is fast approaching when every good citizen will be called upon to talk about his neighbor. This is directly in the line of modern progress, and I do not propose to be left behind when the wave passes over the country. I propose also to nominate Vanderlyn as a member. He isn't much of a talker, but he can be trained. He is very susceptible."

## VIII

*What Vanderlyn Found in the Woods*

Wandering aimlessly and restlessly in the woods one day, Vanderlyn came upon a little log cabin. It was built in what might have been termed an island of pines. Surrounding it upon all sides, the chestnut, the white oak, and the hickory reared their lofty heads heavenward; but nearer still, and almost hiding the cabin with their green, feathery foliage, a little thicket of pines had struggled into robust existence. It is scarcely probable that Vanderlyn would have discovered the house had not a gaunt-looking cur, lying in the shade of a sweetbrier, raised his head and barked feebly. Going a little nearer, Vanderlyn saw the house, which was fast going to ruin. There were no signs of life save the dog. Desolation seemed to have brought peace and quiet to the place.

"Hello!" cried Vanderlyn. "Who's a-keepin' house? Hello!" he yelled again. "Is all hands gone a-visitin'?"

In response to this summons a pale, careworn-looking woman, ill clad and with unkempt hair, came to the door. "Does you want ennything, mister? We ain't nothing but a passel er pore lone people here, and we don't trouble nobody ner nothin'."

The sad and hopeless tone of her voice was as pitiful as her appearance.

"I've bin walkin' 'roun' a right smart'm," said Vanderlyn, "an' I'd like mighty well to git er drink er water."

"You'll have ter come 'roun' to the other do', mister."

Vanderlyn went, and a sight met his eyes as he lifted the gourd to his lips that he never forgot while he lived. In the end of the room (the cabin consisted of but one room) were two pallets. Upon one lay an old man with hair

as white as snow. The pallor of his emaciated face was something awful, and Vanderlyn at first supposed he was dead. Upon the other pallet a woman tossed and moaned and muttered.

"What's the matter in there?" asked Vanderlyn in a low tone.

"Starvation!" The reply came so suddenly and with such terrible meaning that Vanderlyn was stunned for a moment. "Starvation!" repeated the woman with an emphasis that made the strong man before her shudder. "Pap's bin a-lyin' thar more'n a week, an' what he's et indurin' that time wouldn't more'n make a meal fer a kiten. Ef we wuz a-gwine ter die, mister, we aint got a bite er bread er meat in the house ner a dust er meal er flour, an' I'm that weak I can sca'cely ketch one breath atter another. Ef it hadn't bin fer 'Cindy Ashfield, we'd 'a' bin dead by this time, pap an' me, an' I wish ter the Lord she'd 'a' let us be. It 'ud all 'a' bin over by now. 'Cindy's lyin' over thar burnin' up with fever, an' she's bin lyin' thar er two weeks. I crawled down ter the road this mornin' an' waited hours and hours, it 'peared ter me, fer some un ter pass. Ef you got enny wimmen folks, mister, you better git down on your knees in the woods out thar an' ast the Lord ter look atter um better'n He's looked atter us."

"I think I can do better than that," said Vanderlyn in a cheery voice; but in spite of this his thoughts flew back to an old Virginia farmhouse wherein a hale and hearty old man, his white hair falling to his shoulders, sat and smoked his pipe in peace and comfort, and where a sweet-faced old woman smiled at the romping grandchildren who gathered around her. And somehow in this connection he thought of Jack—Jack, who had never romped about the grandmother's knee and over whose fair curls the gentle hand of the grandfather had never passed. These thoughts passed through Vanderlyn's mind so quickly and seemed such a natural outgrowth of the woman's words that he did not pause to analyze them. He stepped into the house and stooped over the old man, who, aroused by the unusual (the woman who had spoken to Vanderlyn was barefooted) or by the mysterious instinct which even in the dark gives warning of the presence of a strange person, turned rest-

lessly and called out in a querulously feeble voice: "Mandy! Mandy! O Mandy!"

"Here I is, pap. I ain't gone."

"It take you a mighty long time 'bout dinner, Mandy, a mighty long time. Make 'aste, Mandy; make 'aste, gal," and then the feeble voice subsided to a low muttering that was quite pitiful to hear.

The woman on the other side was still more restless. She was in the delirium of fever. She laughed and talked and wept, and more than once she called out: "Fetch my baby back, Jim; my little baby. Jes' once, Jim, an' then youk'n take 'im. O, fetch my baby!"

"How fur might it be to the big road?" asked Vanderlyn, who, as was his custom, had made his way through the fields and woods.

"Half a mile right straight ahead," pointing out of the door.

"An' how fur to town?"

"Three mile."

"Do ennybody in Rockville know your daddy?"

"Mighty few folks in these parts," responded the woman, brightening up a little, "but what knows 'Cajy Cooper. He uster be somebody when he had money."

"Well, now you better set down an' res'," said Vanderlyn with some solicitude. "Insider er two hours you'll hear me rattlin' up here, an' we'll see ef we can't fetch these sick folks roun'."

The woman did as she was bid, collapsing rather than sitting down upon the doorsill. "I'll set here tell you come," she said patiently.

Vandelyn disappeared among the thick pines; and the woman, burying her face in her arms, sat swaying her body from side to side and counting the minutes until his return. Vanderlyn reached the road, turned to the right, and walked toward Rockville. Presently he heard the rattle of a buggy behind him, and he turned to look. It was Dr. Tidwell—Dr. Frank, as the people of Rockville, old and young, called him. Vanderlyn gave a yell that astonished the Doctor's horse and surprised the placid old gentleman himself.

"Why, bless my soul, man!" he exclaimed as Vanderlyn came running back, "what is the matter?"

"I tell you what, Doc, ef this ain't provadence, then I'm a dirt eater. I wuz jes' gwine arter you, an' here you is. Do you know 'Cajy Cooper?"

"I ought to. We went to school together."

"Well, the folks at his house is mighty sick, an' he's wussen sick. He's starvin'."

"Tut, tut!" exclaimed the well-fed old physician. "I'd like to hear of a man starving in this county. Why, sir, it would revolt public sentiment. It would be worse than assassination."

"My witness ain't fur, Doc," said Vanderlyn, "an' I want you ter come an' look at 'im."

"Very well, I'll go. But I tell you the thing is impossible. My son is the ordinary, and he"—

"This way, Doc," said Vanderlyn, seizing the reins and turning into the woods. "It's right over yonder." And the Doctor's gray, which had ambled peacefully over the red hills and far-reaching valleys of that section, was urged into a gallop. The rickety old buggy spun through the trees in the most confusing manner, but before the astonished physician could frame a protest the buggy was pulled up at the door of the cabin.

"I tell you what, Doc, ef you gwineter be enny good roun' here, you got ter be mighty spry."

Dr. Tidwell did not respond to this. He was looking at the haggard face of the woman sitting in the door, who had raised her head as the buggy came rattling up.

"Why, bless my soul, Mandy! What's the matter with you?" The old man had known her from a child.

"Lack er vittles, Dr. Tidwell," she replied with a pitiful attempt at a smile.

"Who've you got sick here?"

"Me an' pap an' 'Cindy Ashfield."

The physician got his medicine case from under the seat of the buggy and went into the house. The old man was still muttering and giving feeble directions about his imaginary dinner, and 'Cindy Ashfield was imploring "Jim" to bring her baby back. Presently the Doctor came to the door again. His face was pale, and he appeared to be ex-



cited. "Mr. Vanderlyn, I wish you would drive to town and ask Dr. Ramsey to come out here as quick as he can. This is a serious piece of business, a very serious piece of business. Tell Ramsay to be in a hurry. Then drive to my house and tell my wife to send a chicken, some rice, and all the cold victuals she has in the house, and don't be rough with Maggie."

Maggie was the mare, the ambling gray, and Vanderlyn wasn't very rough on her; but people whom he passed on the road said afterwards that nobody would have thought the old nag—she was a sort of landmark in that section—had so much life in her. It is to be presumed that Maggie was somewhat astonished, but she was too conservative in her methods to make any demonstration. She merely bent her head to the bit, and in a very short time Vanderlyn was in Rockville. It was not long before Maggie was returning with an addition to her burden of Dr. Ramsay, a hamper of provisions, and a bottle of wine, which was suggested by the thoughtfulness of the young physician.

It was a long struggle the old doctor and his colleague had with disease and the results of want. For weeks 'Cajy Cooper and 'Cindy Ashfield lay almost in the arms of death. They were provided with every comfort, and Vanderlyn watched by their bedside night after night until he came to regard them as specially in his charge. There was something weird in the monotony of thus ministering to the sick, engulfed, as it seemed to Vanderlyn, in the darkness of the woods and the still greater darkness of the night. What strange thoughts came to him in his loneliness will never be known; but sitting in the door, watching the far-off stars and listening to the gentle sighing of the pines, he caught glimpses of the man Vanderlyn and came to know him more intimately than ever before. How few men ever have opportunities of meeting themselves face to face in earnest but friendly communion! "Know yourself if you would know all men," says an old writer; but no such philosophy occurred to the uncultivated giant who was playing the part of the good Samaritan. It is more than likely that culture would have driven him into other and perhaps higher realms of reverie; but could it have enabled him to put his thoughts in words when his other

self, as it seemed, stalked out of the misty pines and stood before him, shadowy but arrogant, they would have been something like this:

"Who are you?" to the shadow.

"Daniel Vanderlyn."

"Who am I?"

"I neither know who you are nor what you will be."

"I am rid of Vanderlyn, then?"

"He will never trouble you any more."

"It is better so. Let him go his ways about the world. I shall remain here and do my duty."

"But I was kind to you," from the shadow.

"After a fashion, yes. Kinder to me than I will be to you."

"I gave you a child."

"That was well. But I will never wander up and down the world with him as you did."

"Then you will never find your enemy, the man you have been pursuing."

"I have forgiven him. The act that made him my enemy gave me all the happiness I have ever had. He was my benefactor."

And so, with the pines sighing gently, the stars glittering overhead, a screech owl shivering and crying in the woods, and a woman in the delirium of fever calling for her baby always, Daniel Vanderlyn communed with the shadow of himself that arose and came to him out of the darkness of the night.

## IX

### *A Cautious Kinsman*

It came to pass, therefore, that while Mrs. Padgett was dispensing her gossip and dipping her snuff, and while Miss Jane Perryman was delivering her lecture, Vanderlyn was either wandering between William Wornum's academy and 'Cajy Cooper's, or sitting in the door of the rude log cabin listening to the katydids and the feeble cries of the woman tossing and rolling in the delirium of fever, or communing in a half serious or half humorous way with the shadow of himself that seemed to gather shape in the oppressive loneliness and gloom of the dark. It came to pass also

that he did not accept Judge Walthall's invitation to dine with him the day after the little incident with the horses. He watched with the sick during the long nights and joined the schoolboys in their sports in the cool afternoons. Only Jack, the schoolmaster, and Dr. Tidwell knew of his mission, and these seemed to regard his utter devotion to his charges as a matter of course, as something characteristic of the man; but none of them who could have followed him to the hovel where distress seemed to have taken up her abode would have recognized the Vanderlyn who romped and played with the children in the man who sat in the cabin door as silent as the gloom itself, thinking, dreaming, watching, endeavoring to solve a problem that always eluded him. If he had dreamed that he was nursing back to life one of the only two persons who could solve this problem for him, perhaps he might have faltered in his work of charity. Perhaps if the future could have been unfolded to him as he sat night after night gazing into darkness, if the shadow of his old self with which he communed could have had the gift of prophecy, he would have taken Jack by the hand and wandered forth through the blossoming fields into strange lands. We shall never know. It is enough to say that the shadow could not prophesy, and he remained to face the future with the serene confidence and courage that made him more of a man than most of his fellows. He knew he had a duty to perform; and though this was the problem that returned always to perplex him, he never for a moment faltered. He must do his duty, but how and when? This was the question.

Thus, with the problem continually before him and his other self flitting through the pines a pitiful ghost of the past, he ministered to the sick and watched the legions of wakeful stars sweep slowly across the skies in vain pursuit of the sun. But after a few nights his loneliness, except in a vague way, ceased to oppress him; and his problem, while it was ever present, no longer vexed him. The solemn silences by which he was surrounded seemed to soothe him, and the night wind rippling tremulously through the leaves of the oak and softly through the feathery boughs of the pines ministered unto his vexations, so that what-

ever thought or feeling came to worry was quickly dissipated by his surroundings.

Neither poet nor philosopher has written adequately of the vast silence of the deep woods when night has muffled all ordinary sounds. We chatter of this as of the infinity of space and pass it by; we make faces at the moon and measure the voids that yawn upon her sterile surface; we look at the sun and run trippingly back to her first eclipse; we weigh Sirius and boast of having measured Mercury; we laugh at the wandering comet that rushes through the skies, pursued by myriads of meteors, and we entangle the shining star drifts; but we cannot solve the mysteries nor measure the magnitude of the silence that seems to settle upon all nature and all space in the lonely hours of night. It appears to be a cause rather than a condition, marvelous and awe-inspiring. It was in the midst of this silence that Vanderlyn, for want of something better to do, came to inspect himself and to analyze his feelings and impulses, not gloomily, but cheerfully, as one engages in a pastime; and thus it was that he came to know himself.

A few nights after Vanderlyn had installed himself as nurse he was sitting in his accustomed place in the door when his attention was arrested by the sound of some one walking in the underbrush. It was a strange sound to hear in that place at that hour (the position of the stars showed that it was about twelve o'clock), and Vanderlyn was curious to know what manner of person was abroad in the wilderness. The sound of the footsteps came nearer and then suddenly ceased. Then it began again, ceased once more, seemed to come forward, and finally developed into the figure of a man moving somewhat cautiously in the deep shadows of the pines. Vanderlyn watched it with some curiosity. It appeared to him one of the many phenomena of the loneliness that surrounded him like the waters of a sea, but the figure still pressed forward and came nearer until it stood quite close to the silent watcher.

"You look like you sorter mistook your bearin's, stranger."

"No," said the newcomer. "I'm a-huntin' up them that's lost thern."

"What might your name be?"

"That's neither here ner thar. Hit ain't a name that'll stand bandyin' about in the dark."

"A man's good name," said Vanderlyn carelessly, "don't gether no dust a-passin' frum mouth ter mouth."

"No, I reckon not," responded the stranger, "an' it don't lose nuthin' by bein' let 'lone. Similarly I ain't worried 'bout your'n, an' I ain't gwine to up an' ast you fer it. I'm a-huntin' a woman named 'Cindy Ashfield."

"You ain't got fur to look," said Vanderlyn quietly. "She's lyin' in thar at the pint er death."

"Sick?" asked the man eagerly, coming nearer.

"You'd think it. Outer her head the whole blessed time an' a-talkin eternally."

"Will she die?"

"The doctor can't tell. It's a tough 'rastle. She gits better ez soon's she gits wuss, an' gits wuss ez soon's she gits better."

"Does she know folks?"

"She wouldn't know her own mammy frum Adam's house cat."

Just then the woman turned uneasily in her bed and began to talk in the delirious fashion of those who are suffering from an extreme fever. It was the same old cry to which Vanderlyn had become used: "Jim! Jim! O Jim!"

"It's me she's a-callin'," exclaimed the stranger in a suppressed voice. "Nobody on this earth but me."

"You?"

"Yes, it's me. I know it. 'Cindy wouldn't holler fer no livin' soul like that 'ceptin' it wuz me."

"Please, Jim, fetch back my baby, my little baby, my poor little baby! O, fetch 'im back, Jim! Jes' once, Jim! My little baby!"

"No, 'tain't me," said the man eagerly. "It's somebody else she's a-hollerin' arter. 'Tain't me."

"Do you know her?" Vanderlyn asked.

"Do you know your sister?"

"It is doubtful," Vanderlyn responded. "And so you're her brother? Well, Mr. Jeems Ashfield, I am glad you dropped around. It wuz gittin' durned lonesome a-settin' here lissenin' to the crickets and the scritch owls."

"Does she take on much like this?" asked Ashfield.

"Frum mornin' tell night an' frum night tell mornin'. Won't you go in an' see 'Cindy?"

"No, not jes' yit. Hit mout sorter daze 'er, you know. Delereousness ain't gotter be tampered with, they tells me."

The man was evidently restless and nervous. He stood first upon one foot and then upon the other and rubbed his hands together incessantly.

"You ain't got nuthin' that 'ud fit the dampness like a dram, is you?" he asked finally.

"No," said Vanderlyn. "Licker's too hot fer this kinder weather."

"Wouldn't be too hot fer me," responded the other. "I'm beginning to feel right coolish. Well," after a pause, "I mus' be gittin' 'long. Clocks don't stop an' wait fer a feller to stan' 'roun' an' turn loose his jaw, an' I got a mighty fur ways to sa'nter."

"You might as well go in an' see 'Cindy," Vanderlyn persisted.

"'Twouldn't do no good, Cap; she wouldn't know me, an' I dessay I wouldn't know her. Hit's 'bout even. But I'd like ding nation well to know who that Jim is she's a-callin' on."

"Maybe she knows an' maybe she don't," answered Vanderlyn dryly.

"That's what make I say what I do," continued the other. "I don't know no Jim but me, an' the baby is a bran'-new wrinkle. But it's bin mighty nigh six years sence I seed 'Cindy, an' I dunno what's turned up in that time."

"You've been travelin', I reckon," Vanderlyn suggested.

"Edzackly so, Cap, goin' 'bout frum pos' to piller. I didn't find 'Cindy at home an' 'lowed maybe she might be visitin' at Mandy Cooper's. Well, I'll drap in sometime when Cindy mightn't be worried by strangers."

"Youer her brother, ain't you?" Vanderlyn inquired as the man walked off into the darkness.

"Yes, I am, but what kin I do?"

"O, nothin'. Good night."

The sound of the man's footsteps died away, the crickets and the katydids endeavored to impress Vanderlyn with their presence, and a whippoorwill added her voice to the concert.

"Her brother!" Vanderlyn mused, lighting his pipe and walking out under the shadow of the pines. "She ought ter be proud of sech kin. A man that stays away six year makes himself ska'se, an' yit [remembering the little farmhouse in Virginia] a man that stays away fifteen year makes himself ska'ser. I'm a sinner ef he don't."

The next morning Vanderlyn rode to Rockville with Dr. Tidwell, who visited the sick twice a day.

"Doc," said Vanderlyn after the two had ridden in silence some little distance, "is 'Cindy Ashfield got a brother?"

"Well, really, now let me see. It can't be Jim"—

"That's the party," exclaimed Vanderlyn. "He give us a pop call last night."

"Jim Ashfield!" bringing Maggie to a standstill in the road.

"That's what he says, an' he's a good witness, I reckon."

"Why, bless my life, it can't be Jim Ashfield. With all his villainy, he's no fool. He doesn't dare to come back here. It was as much as my son and the sheriff could do to prevent the people from lynching him not six years ago. He'd be strung up sure. Why, he's the confoundest scoundrel unhung, that same Jim Ashfield. You don't mean to tell me that the rascal is back again?"

"That's what he said, Doc. He didn't hang roun' long. What's he done?"

"Why, bless my soul! Haven't you heard about Jim Ashfield? Any child can tell you. He is the most notorious rascal in Georgia."

"Did he kill ennything?"

"Worse than that, sir," replied the Doctor with judicial gravity. "Worse than that. He's an incendiary and a child stealer."

"A child stealer?" exclaimed Vanderlyn, growing grave himself.

"Yes, sir, a child stealer."

"When was this, Doc?"

"In 1841. The way of it was this: He was forever hanging around Judge Walthall's plantation, mixing and mingling with the negroes and giving them whisky, until one day the Judge caught him sneaking about the place and

ordered him off. The next day the Judge's dwelling house was burned."

"Burned?"

"Yes, sir, burned to the ground; and but for the carriage driver, who happened to hear the popping and cracking of the flames, the Walthall family would have been roasted alive. Yes, sir, roasted alive."

"Did they ketch him?"

"He was suspected, arrested, and brought to trial; but the testimony was not sufficient to convict him, though public opinion had already made up its verdict."

(She returned, the child was gone. It couldn't be found high nor low. Jim Ashfield had been seen in Rockville early that morning, and suspicion immediately fastened upon him.)<sup>1</sup>

"How old wuz the baby, Doc?"

"Nearly a year old and as bright a child as you ever saw."

"Is the baby ever bin found?"

"We scoured the country," continued Dr. Tidwell, "but no Jim Ashfield could we find; and it was more than a year after that when old Davy Roach, who had hauled a load of cotton to Augusta, laid eyes on the wretch and had him arrested. At first he denied that he had stolen the child, but finally agreed to restore it if Judge Walthall would guarantee not to prosecute him and to get him safe out of town. The Judge jumped at the proposition, but the boys wouldn't hear to it until Mrs. Walthall appeared among them. And where do you suppose the baby was found? Why, sir, 'Cindy Ashfield had it all the time, even the clothes it had on when it was stolen. A poor weak-minded creature 'Cindy is. She took on awful when the Judge and his wife and the crowd went to get the child. She was really fond of it, and she carried on to such an extent that Mrs. Walthall employed her as nurse, and she nursed the baby until it died."

"Did the baby die?" asked Vanderlyn.

"Yes, sir. It never thrived. It just faded away. And

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<sup>1</sup>This matter in parenthesis was published just so in the *Constitution*, indicating unfinished work in Mr. Harris's manuscript.



so Jim Ashfield's back again? Well, he'll have some fun if he makes himself too prominent around here."

## x

*Voices in the Night*

Vanderlyn made no more inquiries of the worthy doctor, who, taking advantage of the silence that ensued, fell into what the newspaper reporter of the present day would not inaptly term "a genial doze." It was his custom, and in inaugurating it he illustrated in a very forcible manner one of Miss Jane's impromptu proverbs to the effect that "It's an honest man that'll trust hisself with his own horse." The mare knew her way, and as she ambled along Dr. Tidwell slept and Daniel Vanderlyn surrendered himself to his thoughts, and these invariably carried him back to the sick woman calling for her baby and the old man who had so narrowly escaped falling a victim to hunger. Somehow or other he was not troubled about Jack as in the old days. Nor need he have been. The boy rapidly grew in the good graces of Miss Jane Perryman and the schoolmaster. He was bright and tractable, and his precocity never assumed the shape of perversity. In the evenings, while Vanderlyn was engaged in his work of charity, the boy would lay his head in the old lady's lap and listen quietly to the conversation, occasionally making some modest comment of his own or asking a question, and Miss Jane never seemed so well contented as when she was passing her hands caressingly through the thick curls of the little boy, who was so good-natured, so patient, and so obedient. Upon such occasions it was observed by the schoolmaster that she was not as critical in her remarks and that even the tone of her voice lost something of its old-time asperity.

They had famous times—Miss Perryman, Nora, the schoolmaster, and Jack. They constituted a little social world of their own, the quiet of which was never disturbed save by the visit of some newcomer or the untimely serenades of Tiny Padgett, the village poet, who made no attempt to conceal that he was in love with Nora. Unfortunately, Tiny's serenades were generally the result of that befuddled condition of mind that usually waits upon a too

frequent inspection of wine when it is red; and when his weak voice rose upon the night air in startling proximity to the quiet people who sat in the little porch, Miss Jane was wont to remark: "Well, I wish I may die ef that Padgett chap ain't on another spree!"

"O, don't make fun of him, sister," Miss Nora would say. And then the schoolmaster: "No; the boy's in love."

"Well, ef I wuz Nora, I'd marry him twice over but what I'd stop that racket. It makes a body feel right flabby to listen to 'im. It's sorter like wringin' the water outa a raw oyster."

In justice to the love-smitten poet it must be said that he was oftener sober than drunk, and upon such occasions he contented himself with lounging upon a bench in front of Vanderlyn's shop and watching his lady love's window from afar. Through the mysterious influence of that pity which the strong feel for the weak or from some other cause Vanderlyn had come to be on very familiar terms with young Padgett, who in his maudlin way was blindly devoted to Vanderlyn. One evening, some weeks after 'Cindy Ashfield and 'Cajy Cooper had been pronounced convalescent by Dr. Tidwell, the occupants of Miss Jane's porch saw the light of a cigar shining in the direction of Vanderlyn's shop. It was a signal that Tiny Padgett was on hand.

"The faithful lover is at his post," said the schoolmaster. "Well, I hope to gracious he ain't chuned up," remarked Miss Jane fervently. "Why don't the little wretch act like white folks an' come in the house. Nobody won't bite him, I reckon."

"Poets are sensitive," the schoolmaster said. "They prefer to worship at a distance. Mocking birds never sing in flocks. The old troubadours never went in droves, and even the wood robin hides himself to sing."

"Well, why don't Padgett hide, I wonder? Why don't he go off in the woods, where nobody can't hear him? It's good fer him that he don't come a-howlin' under the windows, else he'd git a shovelful er hot ashes."

But the poet did not tune his voice to sing, and presently those who sat in the porch heard footsteps coming down the street.

"That's Dan," said Jack with sudden interest.

"Let's wait an' see what they say," said Miss Jane.

The strong, hearty voice of Vanderlyn broke the silence: "Why, hello, little Padg! You here?"

"Yes," returned the poet in a piping voice, suggestive of an accumulation of thought. "Yes, I thought I'd come out and cool off a little and have a chat with you."

"You're mighty backward, Padg. Ef you don't mind, that young Reed'll cut you out."

In spite of himself this allusion to Emory Reed jarred unpleasantly upon the schoolmaster's ear, and he moved uneasily in his chair. "You've gotter be mighty spry ef you git ahead er Reed. They tell me that he breaks a bottle er camp meetin' draps on his cloze ev'y day an' two on Sundays, an' he looks jes' like he comes outen a ban' box. It'll be like draggin' a sack er salt thu' wet san' ef you take the shine outer him."

The poet laughed a little weak laugh. "O, I'm not on that line, Mr. Vanderlyn. I wasn't born lucky like some people. I am unfortunate. No good woman would want me for a husband, and I should never think of marrying a woman I really loved."

"How's that, Padgy?"

"I know my failings. I am one of the no-accounts. And then there's the liquor; you know how that serves me. Some people are born weak. I haven't touched a drop in a week, and yet I may wake up in the morning with a desire for drink absolutely uncontrollable. It was the way with me at college, and that is why I was expelled."

"Damnation, man;" exclaimed Vanderlyn savagely. "Ef you kin let up on licker one week, youk'n let up a lifetime."

"O, it's very well for you to talk that way, Van. They all say so. I hear it wherever I go. But I know better. I know what I can do, and I know what I can't do. You might as well say that old man Cooper could have controlled his desire for food. Don't preach, Van."

"I ain't much in that line, Padgy," said Vanderlyn; "but durn me ef I wouldn't like to see you stan' at your full height."

"O, I'll do well enough. There's this consolation, Van," he continued with a little sigh: "I don't hurt anybody but

myself. If I could be made to believe that any woman on earth loved me, I should be miserable. It is better as it is."

Then, as if desirous of speaking of something else, Padgett said: "What's all the news, Van? They tell me you've got to be a regular doctor."

"Yes," replied Vanderlyn in an earnest tone, "I'm a fust-rate doctor. I'd like mighty well to take you in han', Padgy, an' fetch you back to life."

"You are a good one, Van," he said a little sadly and wistfully, "and you could do it if anybody could. But it can't be done. Shortly after I left Athens a schoolmate asked me to visit him. He was dead before I got the letter. If I had taken him at his word, my visit would have been a little late. I have fought with myself for years. A stronger man would have conquered. Something was lacking. But how about 'Cajy Cooper and the Ashfields? They told me that Jim Ashfield had settled among us again."

"Well, that's the funny part, blamed ef it ain't," replied Vanderlyn. "I talked to him once in the dark, but I wish I may be shot ef I ever seed 'im again, an' 'Cindy ain't never laid eyes on 'im."

"Well, I'll tell you what, Van, that 'Cindy is a deep one. You have heard about the baby business?"

"Jedge Walthall's little un?"

"Well, that girl kept the baby out there in the woods more'n a year, and nobody knew it. The boys wanted to send her along with the lovely brother of hers; but she cried and cried and said she didn't know the baby was stolen. She went on at a terrible rate. According to her story, Jim told her that he had found the little thing in the woods; but it was remembered by those who searched her house for Jim and watched it afterwards that it was a month or more before 'Cindy could be found. The child was so changed by exposure and lack of proper food that its own mother hardly knew it. That 'Cindy is a shrewd one. If she hasn't seen Jim, the two have lost their cunning."

"No," said Vanderlyn decisively, "she ain't seen 'im. I ast her."

Young Padgett laughed. "Maybe not, Van. It isn't for me to judge even 'Cindy Ashfield."

The village poet made two friends that night. The school-

master had regarded him as an utterly dissipated young blackguard, and Miss Jane had always alluded to him as "that drunken vagabond of a Padgett." They were both impressed, and the schoolmaster was not a little saddened, by what they had heard. The latter, moved by some sudden impulse, arose, passed out of the little gate, and crossed the street to where Vanderlyn and Padgett were sitting. "I have appointed myself a committee," he said, "to come over and invite you gentlemen to sit with us awhile. Miss Jane and Miss Nora are nodding in the porch, and Jack is fast asleep, and I am in need of company. I was dozing myself until I heard Vanderlyn's voice. Won't you come over, Mr. Padgett?"

"Me?" inquired the young man in a half-amazed, half-amusing tone. It had been so long since such a cordial invitation had been extended in Rockville.

"Certainly. Why not?" heartily. "Can't you be sociable? Come."

Tiny Padgett laughed. "I don't think I'm quite presentable, Mr. Wornum." But he went all the same. The temptation to be near Nora and hear her voice was even more irresistible than his periodical thirst for liquor. It was a memorable evening for him. Sitting where he could see the lines of the beautiful face and listening for the pleasant voice to break in the conversation, he gave himself wholly up to the spell of the moment. He was well educated, thoroughly informed upon all current topics, and a fluent conversationalist. But upon that occasion he surpassed himself. Inspired by the presence of the woman he loved—yes, worshiped from afar—he became brilliant. With admirable tact the schoolmaster drew him out until even Padgett was astonished at himself. But through it all there ran an undercurrent of sadness. He seemed to hear the fair young girl on the other side always asking: "Would you live a new life for my sake?" And he was always replying: "It is too late."

XI

*Love's Labor's Lost*

"Miss Kate!" exclaimed Miss Becky Griggs one afternoon, flinging herself at the feet of her schoolmistress, a

blushing heap of calico, auburn hair, and rosy cheeks. "Miss Kate, what do you think?"

"I think a good many things, my dear."

"O, but this! I mean would you take me for a regular little goose? Mind now, a regular little goose."

The schoolmistress laughed. She was not much older than the young girl who sat at her feet, blushing and looking confused.

"Well, I wouldn't take you for a very small goose," Miss Kate replied, looking down upon the very plump form of her pupil.

"And I am not," assented Becky, pouting and growing red. "I'm a great big goose."

"A goose that is either big or little or both to suit circumstances is a very accommodating bird, I'm sure."

"O Miss Kate, you are teasing. Why can't you sympathize with me?"

"Upon my word, you don't seem to need sympathy," answered the schoolmistress with a very bright smile. "What is the trouble, my dear?"

"I'm in love, Miss Kate," exclaimed the girl, half laughing, half crying.

"Is that all, my dear?" asked the fair Katherine Underwood gayly, but remembering some girlish experience of her own, nevertheless. "That is easily cured. The disease is not as desperate as the books would have you believe. It is like the measles, troublesome, but harmless, especially to young people. What you need, my dear, is a strong cup of ginger tea and plenty of exercise. I have been attacked in the same way myself. I was much younger than you, though," she continued, observing the look of inquiry on the girl's face, "a good deal younger. The poets say that first love is the most lasting, and I believe them; for I have a tender spot in my heart for my first lover, although I know he has been in jail for whipping his wife. The love didn't last, but the romance did, and I don't know that I am any the worse off for it. A cup of tea will cure you."

"How can you talk so, Miss Kate?"

"Experience, my dear. You will learn one of these days

that your dainty little idol, with his kids and polished boots, is not so lovable, after all."

"That is the worst of it," said the girl; "he isn't handsome, and he isn't young, and," with a sudden burst of anger, "I don't believe he is good. No, I don't. I believe he is a humbug, one of the biggest kind of humbugs."

"Pray, who is this ugly old humbug?" asked the schoolmistress.

"I won't tell you, Miss Kate; no, not if I was on the rack. I'm ashamed of it every time I think about it."

"You will discover in time, my dear," said Miss Underwood seriously, "that true love is never ashamed."

"O, I don't mean that, Miss Kate," exclaimed this wayward girl, bursting into tears. "How could I? He is brave and noble and pure, and I am unworthy to speak his name."

"I think," remarked the schoolmistress, ignoring this passionate outburst and looking from her window across the green fields, "that a walk would do us good."

And so the two, gathering themselves up into various little beaknests and adjusting themselves with ever so many hairpins, sallied forth into the avenue that answered the purposes of a street. It was a queer avenue, too, for it led in one direction to the courthouse square in Rockville and in the other to a wide-spreading chestnut grove, and toward this the two young women made their way, one nervous and discontented and the other cool and inquisitive. As they entered the grove and strolled under the green canopy that shut out the sky overhead, save some delicious bits of blue that gleamed here and there through the leaves, a sense of rest and quiet seemed to steal over the younger of the two. The most of us, I fancy, have had the same experience. It seems to be impossible that any human being should defile the vast solitudes of the woods by entering therein bearing the burthens, the passions, and the vexations of everyday life. Perhaps Katherine Underwood was more troubled at heart than her love-smit pupil. She was a quiet woman, little given to confessing her troubles even to herself, and it was only upon rare occasions that her serenity was disturbed. But she must have experienced some sort of relief

in the cool shade of the chestnuts, for she lifted her hands in a quick upward gesture and exclaimed: "Well, this is comforting!"

"It is better than staying in the house and discussing such a detestable subject as men," responded Becky Griggs.

"A little fresh air," said the schoolmistress, "is a wonderful thing. It blows the mental cobwebs utterly away, and we perceive that not a few of our giants are dwarfs."

"What good does that do?" asked the younger woman petulantly. "We go back, gather up the cobwebs, and, lo and behold, there we have our giants again."

"Well, it is a relief, at any rate," replied the other dryly.

"No," said Becky, "it wouldn't be any relief to me. All my giants are real giants, thank goodness! And if they weren't, I shouldn't like to see them parading as dwarfs."

"It will be the end of it sooner or later, my dear. Time turns the telescope as well as the hourglass. What appears close at hand to-day will seem to be far enough off when you are a little older. In a very few years you will be looking through the big end of the telescope. But all the same I should like to know the name of the young man who has stolen your affections."

"I was about to tell you once to-day, Miss Kate," said the girl, "but I'm glad I didn't. I know how differently you would have lifted your eyes, and then you would have asked me about my music lesson."

The schoolmistress laughed merrily. "Well, my dear, I know how these things are. You are young. If age was not attended by experience, we should have no wisdom."

"You are not old enough to be my grandmother, Miss Kate," remarked the girl.

"I am twenty-five, and you are sixteen," said the schoolmistress. "Nine years may represent a great deal or very little, according to circumstances. In my case they represent a great deal."

As she spoke the shadow of a man fell across the pathway, and the next moment a strong, hearty voice had broken in upon the rippling treble of the conversation.

"Good evenin', ladies. We're havin' mighty pleasant weather now."

Becky Griggs started and blushed violently. It was the



voice that had haunted her dreams, and she knew it belonged to the man who appeared to her to be something more than a mere hero. The schoolmistress was only slightly disconcerted, but her eyes drooped as they had drooped once before.

"Good evening, Mr. Vanderlyn," she said. "We were just taking a little walk after school hours, Miss Griggs and I."

"I seen you all a-sa'nterin' long," he replied placidly, "an' I jes' thought I'd stop an' see how you wuz a-gittin' on."

"O, famously, Mr. Vanderlyn, after the ride we had with you. I am sure we can never get done thanking you for your services that day. But for you I fear we should not be walking here."

"Yes'm, you would; yes'm, indeed! Them horses wuz blowed. They couldn't 'a' run a half mile further. They wuz stove up."

"I suppose, then, you stopped to consider all these things?" inquired the schoolmistress so coolly that Becky Griggs, forgetting her own embarrassment, looked at her in astonishment.

"I sorter disremember now," he replied; "but I reckon I kinder figgered things up in my mind. Folks don't take no chances when it comes down to gittin' mangled; least-ways I don't."

Looking up, the schoolmistress imagined she caught a quizzical expression in the blue eyes that gazed down at her with such calm serenity; but she was not sure, and she gave the tall man by her side the benefit of the doubt. It was clearly impossible, she argued to herself, that one so rough should be thoughtful enough to be quizzical, though she wondered afterwards, as women will, why she connected thoughtfulness with the matter, and then she informed herself with some degree of asperity that she was a fool for remembering anything about Vanderlyn at all.

"We intended to write you a note of thanks," she said, speaking for Becky and herself.

"Me?" he asked in astonishment.

"Why, of course, Mr. Vanderlyn."

"What would you 'a' thanked me fer, ladies?" His face

expressed the surprise he felt, but the tone of his voice showed that he had a faint suspicion that the schoolmistress was ridiculing him.

"Why, because—upon my word, Mr. Vanderlyn, I don't understand you! As a general thing, when men talk like you women come to the conclusion that they are fishing for a compliment."

"But *he* isn't," exclaimed Becky enthusiastically. It was the first time she had ventured to speak, and when the schoolmistress turned to look at her she was blushing violently. The calm blue eyes of Vanderlyn saw nothing in the blush save the embarrassment of a schoolgirl. Katherine Underwood saw therein the secret that Becky Griggs fain would hide, and, seeing it, she felt a little shock of surprise and displeasure. Whether the girl saw that her secret was discovered and thereupon became less confidential in her bearing, or whether the schoolmistress felt a contempt for a passion weak enough to proclaim itself, it is impossible to say; but from that moment the two friends were less cordial to each other, until finally the coolness between them came to be the subject of comment.

Poor Becky! The walk that afternoon under the spreading chestnut trees, with the yellow sunlight slipping serenely through the leaves and breaking into golden waves upon the path below and with her hero at her side and his voice sounding in her ears, was to her a precious memory to the last. The romance of youth threw its enchantment around her, and love's sweet discontent caught the fleeting hour and fashioned it into a memorial. The orioles flashed through the green leaves like firebrands flung from unseen hands, the dusky swallows swept tremulously through the blue overhead, and a partridge in the underbrush called to her wayward mate. All this the girl remembered to her dying day, for within a year the oblivion that awaits us all had overtaken her. Young, beautiful, and pure-hearted, she passed from the world murmuring the name of Vanderlyn to those who knew it not. Thus she passed from the world, and thus she passes from this chronicle.

## XII

*Nora's First Love.*

One day Miss Jane Perryman went to Mr. William Wornum with a serious face. He knew she was disturbed by something out of the ordinary line of daily incidents, but he kept the knowledge to himself.

"I ain't been so flurried," she began, "sence Ferraby got hooked by the brindle cow. It's nothing but worriment in this world, nohow. One minnit we're soun' asleep, an' the nex' minnit a harrycane comes 'long an' lif's the roof off. People that tries to git 'long peaceable don't have nothin' but botheration from day's eend to eend. I ain't no sooner got Ben outen the calaboose, which, if I do say it, he wuz put in thar fer spite, an' I'll tell old Bagley so hisself, than here comes this nice friend er yourn, this nice Mr. Em'ry Reed, to worry me."

"What has Emory done now, Miss Jane?"

"You wouldn't believe it, William Wornum; but las' night I wuz a-settin' out thar in the porch, an' what should I hear but that Em'ry Reed makin' love to Nora in the parlor jest as sassy as a jay bird."

The schoolmaster rose from his seat, walked up and down once, and then stood looking out the window. It seemed strange that little things should attract his attention, but he found himself interested in the evolutions of a flock of small birds. They flew about over the fields and trees, now high in the air, now close to the ground, always preparing to alight and yet never alighting, until finally they lost themselves in the blue of the sky. "It is better that they should," William Wornum thought. "If they could find no comfort here, it is better they should fly away, each with its mate."

Miss Jane was too busy with her thoughts to pay much attention to the schoolmaster. "You oughter heern 'im," she continued. "He sot up thar on the sofy and talked like he had waggin grease on his tongue."

"What did Miss Nora say," the schoolmaster inquired, returning to his chair.

"O, she sot up like any fool gal an' lissened an' snickered tell I had a great notion to jump in thar 'mong 'em an' smack her jaw. I thought I'd come an' ast you what it's

better to do. It's my own jedgment that I oughter give that young feller his walkin' papers. I'm mighty sorry you ever brung him here, William Wornum, mighty sorry. It's allers de way."

"I don't see there is much harm done," said the schoolmaster. "You know that Nora's experience must be that of other girls, and they all have love made to them, more or less."

"Shucks! Nobody never come hangin' roun' me a-whin-in' an' a-splutterin' 'bout love. They had better sense. Fools ez they is, men folks know who to worry."

"Well, I'm sure, Miss Jane," said the schoolmaster, "you have no occasion to feel worried because Emory Reed is making love to Nora. He is a man," continued the schoolmaster, remembering the bright, handsome face and frank, winning manners of the young lawyer, "that any woman might be proud to win."

"I don't like your nice men," said Miss Jane emphatically. "I've seen some mighty game roosters trip themselves up with their wing. What must I do, William Wornum?"

"I don't see that you can do anything, Miss Jane, save to let matters take their own course." His tone was so cold and indifferent and his manner so careless that Miss Jane was at first surprised and then provoked.

"Let what matters take their course?" she asked sharply. "Ef you take me for a nat'l fool, William Wornum, I'd thank you to tell me right out in plain English."

"You asked me for my advice, Miss Jane. I have given it to you. I don't see that you can better matters by offendin' young Reed or fretting Nora. If his attentions are agreeable to her, it would hardly be becoming in you to trouble yourself. Reed is no ordinary man. If I had a sister or a daughter," the schoolmaster continued, still speaking coldly, "I should ask no happier destiny for her than that she become the wife of such a man as Emory Reed."

"O, yes! You men are mighty smart. I ain't doubtin' but what Em'ry Reed's the nicest man in Ameriky, but I'd ruther see it'n to hear tell about it. What do I keer fer his niceness an' his goodness? I ain't gwineter have 'im

hangin' 'roun' crammin' Nora's years fuller his nonsense. That's what I ain't gwineter have."

"Well, Miss Jane," replied the schoolmaster in a gentler tone, "you asked my advice, and I have given it. In your place I should say nothing to Nora and nothing to Emory Reed. You are fortified in the fact that she is blessed with common sense and that he is a gentleman."

"Well, William Wornum, ef it's gotter be a courtin' match, I'll sen' word to Tiny Padgett, an' we'll have a reg'lar sociable. He don't w'ar no slick hats, and he don't put no cinnamon draps on his han'kercher; but I lay he's good as your Em'ry Reed any day, an' more than that, he won't be splittin' people's years a-howlin' an' a-singin' roun' the house."

But Miss Jane did not carry out her threat. True, she was more cordial to poor Padgett and less disposed thereafter to criticize his manifold weaknesses, but neither by word nor sign did she give Emory Reed to understand that she had overheard his little outburst of sentiment or that she disapproved of his frequent visits.

The greatest change of all came over William Wornum. Only at rare intervals did he join the little group that usually assembled in the little porch or in the sitting room. He seemed absorbed in his books. After school hours and on Sundays he took long walks, accompanied always by Jack and sometimes by Vanderlyn. He lost all interest in everything—his negroes, his school, and his studies—and took pains to avoid his friends whenever courtesy would permit him to do so.

"Youer losin' ground with the gals, Profesh," remarked Mr. Bagley one day, "an' youer losin' your health. You look like you bin livin' in a holler tree, dad blamed if you don't."

And, in truth, the schoolmaster was looking rather worsted. He had fought a terrible fight with himself and had conquered. For days and nights he wandered up and down the streets of Rockville and through the woods endeavoring to bring himself to that point where he might contemplate with perfect equanimity the contingency that would make Nora Perryman the wife of Emory Reed. It was a hard struggle, but he conquered. For months he had been

vaguely aware that the blind girl was very dear to him, but it was not until Miss Jane's announcement of Emory Reed's intentions that the schoolmaster became fully aware of the passionate strength and extent of his feelings. It was a terrible blow to him, and it came upon him suddenly. He was totally unprepared for it, but he managed to bear himself with tolerable composure; and Miss Jane, unsuspecting soul, never dreamed of the torture that she was inflicting when she asked his advice with respect to Emory Reed. The schoolmaster resolved then and there to conquer his passion, and to all outward appearance he did. His moroseness gradually left him, and after a time he fell into his old habits. He was sorely tried, however. One afternoon, returning from his academy, he found Nora in the parlor alone. They talked on commonplace topics for a little while, until finally, after a pause, she said: "You have been troubled of late, Mr. Wornum."

"Yes," he answered, somewhat troubled. "Do you never have any troubles, Miss Nora?"

"O sometimes," with a little embarrassed laugh. "I have had a good many recently. I knew you were troubled by the tone of your voice."

"I suppose I betrayed myself even when I asked for more sugar for my tea."

"Now, you are laughing at me. But it is true, and I know you are never troubled by little things."

There was a pause, and presently she continued: "Were you ever in love, Mr. Wornum?"

He winced a little and looked curiously at the fair face before him. But the answer came without hesitation. "Once, a long time ago," he replied to her question as frankly as though a little child had asked it.

"Was it *very* long ago?"

"It seems so to me."

"And you never married?"

"It appears not," he answered, laughing a little.

"Did the lady die?" asked the girl in a low tone.

"No. She lived on and lived happily. She was very young, too young to be told that she was beloved by an uncouth old man like me."

"And she never knew it?"

"I am happy in the belief that she never did."

"I think she ought to have known," said the girl with a sigh.

"Why?" he asked a little bitterly. "If a true woman, the hopelessness of the story would have grieved her; if otherwise, she would merely have wounded by her flippancy the man who loved her. It is far better as it is. Besides"—

There was a pause. He feared to go on. Momentary silence fell upon the two. The girl seemed to be listening to sounds that no one but herself could hear. Her face was pale, but O how beautiful! The schoolmaster watched her closely.

"Well, Mr. Wornum," she said presently, "you haven't finished."

"Yes," he replied. "There is nothing more to be told. A friend of mine loved this woman."

"And you gave way to this friend? I dare say," said the girl a little scornfully, "that the lady appreciated such generosity."

He regarded her curiously. Was this the gentle Nora of old?

"I dare say she will one of these days," he answered. "If you call it generosity, I was generous indeed. I gave her a heart of gold, a man full of pure and noble impulses."

"And you are satisfied?"

"More than satisfied," he answered. "I feel the consciousness of having performed a disagreeable duty, of having made a little sacrifice of self, if you will."

"Such love as that is a conceit," she answered.

"As you will," he replied; but her words and her tone cut him to the quick. "It is a consolation to know that if it is a conceit it has troubled no one but myself."

"Perhaps the lady loved you," the girl persisted.

"Impossible! We were friends. If she thought of me at all, it was as a sister might think of a brother. My friend who loved her was far worthier."

"And you are not unhappy?"

"Far from it. My duty lay in the direction of unhappiness for a time, but that time has passed. If I have been the means of bringing happiness to her, I shall be satisfied."

"But if you have not?"

"Well, I have done the best I could. I could do no more."

"You might have done less."

"Upon my word, Miss Nora," said the schoolmaster, laughing and attempting to give a lighter turn to the conversation, "I shall have to tell Emory that you are growing uncommonly wise of late."

"Why tell Mr. Reed?" the girl asked, blushing a little.

"O, he would be glad to know. He is a great admirer of yours."

"And a great friend of yours?"

"Undoubtedly. A very great friend. If there is a true-hearted man on earth, it is Emory Reed."

"Is he as worthy as the friend for whom you made such an unnecessary sacrifice?" asked Nora.

"Every whit. He is worthy of all the happiness that fate is capable of bestowing upon him. He is worthy of any woman."

Thereupon the conversation lagged for a few moments. Nora was evidently not prepared to argue the question of young Reed's merits. Finally she said: "I am afraid the lady you loved is unhappy."

"Are you unhappy?" he asked.

"Why do you wish to know?"

"Because she is no more unhappy than you are. She is young, and unhappiness never comes to the young."

"It might," she replied.

"But it rarely does," he persisted.

"You cannot tell," she said; "you do not know."

### XIII

#### *Sweet Shrubs and Flowers*

One afternoon, some time after Vanderlyn had met Kate Underwood and her pupil in the wood, he received a dainty little note, the purport of which was as follows:

"*Dear Mr. Vanderlyn:* Since I met you the other day I have come to be more and more of the opinion that it is my duty to express to you the gratitude I feel for your courage in saving me and some of my friends from death some time ago. It may appear indelicate at this late day for me to express my thanks in this shape; but when I remember



how grateful to you my mother will be and how, kneeling by her hearthstone in New England, her prayers will ascend to heaven in your behalf, I cannot refrain from sending to you this poor acknowledgment of my gratitude. I know how inadequate such an expression must seem to you, but it is not impossible that some day, when you have nothing better to think of, you may remember with a feeling not altogether unpleasant that you were the means of saving the life of a woman far away from home and friends and that she was disposed to be grateful.

"Your friend,

KATHERINE UNDERWOOD."

The reception of this note was a momentous event in Vanderlyn's life. It was feminine from first to last. It was written upon an exceedingly small sheet of paper, and just the faintest shadow of perfume seemed to cling to it. The handwriting was almost as delicate as the perfume, but somehow or other Vanderlyn managed to make it out, and then it seemed to him that it was nothing more than his duty to thank heaven that he had been the means of saving this woman's life. He reread the note time and again; he even held it up to the light to the wonderful exactness with which the lines had been followed, and each time the faint perfume, rising, it seemed to him, as an incense, scattered itself mysteriously through the air, an essence more subtle and overpowering to this great, rough man than anything that had come to him. He did not stop to consider whether it was lavender, attar of roses, musk, or sandalwood, but he recognized its potency. It appeared—this faint odor—to come to him as an appeal, a mysterious appeal which he neither strove nor hoped to understand. It was as if he had heard the plaintive cry of a little child in the darkness and had searched for it only to find it safe in its mother's arms. It awoke impulses in his soul that he had flattered himself were beyond resurrection; it stirred into life the old romantic fancies that had made him a wanderer upon the face of the earth.

Perhaps if he had known it was the custom of the fair Katherine to submit her note paper to a bath of cheap cologne water, the odor that distracted him would have proved less potent; but it was not given him to know, and

the subtle perfume continued to exercise a strong influence over him. He did not show the note to the schoolmaster, nor did he take Jack into his confidence. He did not even reply to it; but in the summer mornings thereafter the fair Katherine, going to her duties, found her schoolroom odorous with all manner of wild flowers. The sweet shrub shed its perfume from her desk, and the fragrance of the honeysuckle and the wild jasmine floated through the room. Vaguely guessing to whom she was indebted for these little offerings, Miss Underwood, nevertheless, closely catechized her pupils about the flowers, and even blushed when one of them, a pale, puny little thing, replied in a loudly shrill voice that "the man what cotched the run'way hosses'd brung 'em."

It came to pass that Vanderlyn, idling through the long days, divided his time between wandering through the woods and attending the two schools in the capacity of privileged visitor. At William Wornum's academy he played boisterously with the boys, and at Miss Underwood's he contented himself with curiously watching the progress of the young ladies, who soon came to regard his presence as a matter of course. He never failed to renew the floral offering he had laid upon the fair Katherine's desk. Sometimes it was only a wild rose, sometimes a bunch of dogwood blossoms; but whatever it was, it was always there. At first the schoolmistress was indifferent to these little offerings and (by way of experiment, as she afterwards confessed) allowed them to lie untouched and unnoticed where they had been placed; but this seemed to have no effect upon the giver. Fresh offerings took the place of the old ones every morning, and Miss Underwood, with feminine inconsistency, began to fear that Vanderlyn's flowers were laid upon her desk more for his own gratification than hers; and if her conjecture was not correct, she never found it out from the stalwart man who strayed to her school in the afternoon and who seemed to be as much interested in the sports of the little girls as in their recitations. Whereupon this practical woman resorted to trickery. She took to wearing Vanderlyn's flowers in her hair, and upon one occasion she pinned a little cluster of heartsease against her throat, and a very perfect throat it was.

She was not sure that Vanderlyn had observed this proceeding, which was intended to be a mark of special favor; but it happened that he remained until after school hours, and the two walked together to the tavern where Miss Underwood boarded.

"You perceive, Mr. Vanderlyn," she said, smiling brightly, "that your flowers are not wasted."

He laughed. "I dunno'm ef 'tain't a waste fer folks to pull 'em; but they're growin' wile roun' here, an' ef I didn't fetch 'em in the cattle'd trample on 'em an' the sun'd wilt 'em."

The fair Katherine resented this sort of philosophy.

"I am to suppose, then," she said somewhat sarcastically, "that you pluck them by the wagonload and, in order to prevent the cows from treading upon them, bring them in and parcel them out among your friends. Mr. Wornum, no doubt, gets by far the largest share."

"No'm, 'tain't like that; but wimmen don't look right 'less they've gotter lotter flowers lyin' roun'. That schoolhouse er yourn 'ud look monst'ous lonesome 'less it had flowers showin' up somewheres. It's funny," he continued, "but one little bloom'll put you in mind er all out er doors. Ef I had to be shet up day in an' day out, I'd take 'n' have flowers strowed all roun', an' ef I could ketch a bird I'd fasten him in jest to learn 'im what endyoance folks has to have. It's sorter clippin' roun' the edges when it comes to shettin' us up."

Evidently Vanderlyn failed to appreciate the drift of Miss Underwood's remarks, and she was half inclined to believe that he was stupid.

"Well," said she, "don't you think your flowers look better here," pointing to her throat and blushing a little, "than if they were lying upon my desk?"

"O, a long ways!" he replied. "It helps the flowers, but it don't help you. Pictures ain't made to set off frames."

It was a delicate compliment clumsily expressed, but she appreciated it none the less on that account. It gave her a clearer view of the man, and she came to perceive how grand a quality the lack of egotism may become in simple, brave natures. She saw for the first time how attractive the utter unconsciousness of self may be, and Vanderlyn

at once became an object of interest. In her own way this Northern woman was a student of human nature; and although she was gifted with more than ordinary acuteness, she was puzzled to account for some of the characteristics of this man. He was so thoroughly human that he baffled her at every turn.

"I have seen pictures unworthy of their frames," she said after awhile.

"Pictures!" he exclaimed, stopping in the street and looking at her in surprise. His manner of emphasizing the word was at once a protest and a declaration. Looking quickly at him, Miss Underwood thought she had made a discovery. His entire face, it seemed to her, had changed; but the change was as sudden and as evanescent as a shadow passing over the grass, and it left her more puzzled than before.

"Well," she replied, "people called them pictures, and how are we to judge? We know a good picture from a bad one; but who is to tell us what is a picture and what is not?"

He laughed a little. "Nobody, I reckon. We're obleeged to come down to guessin', an' when we git to guessin' we're on our own groun'."

This was so different from what she expected that she looked at him again; but if she sought a revelation in his face, she failed to find it.

"Shall I tell you what I think of you, Mr. Vanderlyn?" she asked presently.

"Yes'm," he said. His reply was so simple that she rather faltered.

"Well, then, I think you are masquerading."

"Doin' which?"

"Masquerading, playing a part for a purpose. You needn't pretend to misunderstand me."

He regarded her gravely, wishing in his soul that circumstances might permit him to walk by her side under the clustering china trees and tell her of the struggle he had had with the shadow of his former self in the woods that surrounded old 'Cajy Cooper's cabin. If he could only lay before her the problem that vexed and worried him day and night, he thought it would be a great relief; but he shrank from it. He had convinced himself that the time had not

come. Had he betrayed himself to this sharp-eyed, keen-witted woman? He thought not.

"I'm a sorter play actor, then, I reckon," he responded placidly. "One er them fellers what goes a-trollipin' roun' makin' out he's in love when he ain't."

"O, not that, Mr. Vanderlyn. I've never heard of your trolloping around, as you call it."

"You ain't never heered much er me, then," he commented.

"And I have never heard of your pretending to be in love. You confuse me with some one else."

"And you are mixin' me up with some other feller. You'll know ez quick ez the nex' one 'bout my playin' double."

"I dare say I will," said Miss Underwood dryly. "But I wanted to say to you, Mr. Vanderlyn, that I appreciate your kindness in bringing me flowers."

"O, it ain't no trouble," he replied. "I find 'em growin' all over the woods. They come right to my han'. But sweet s'ubs is a-gittin' kinder skeerce. The niggers is a-pullin' 'em, an' they are droppin' off the bushes. It's the last er pea time with sweet s'ubs, an' you gotter go a mighty fur ways if you git enny."

"Nevertheless," said Miss Underwood, "I found quite a supply on my desk this morning. I have them here now in my handkerchief."

Just then the two, sauntering along the wide street, passed Mrs. Bagley and Mrs. Padgett.

"Well, I declare to gracious, Prue!" exclaimed the latter. "Did you ever see anything like that? Don't that beat your time? I allers said that Yankee 'oman 'ud be up to some devilment before she quit, and now she's a-settin' her cap for that Dan Vanderlyn. I never seed sich imperdence."

"But she ain't ketched 'im yet," remarked Mrs. Prudence Bagley sagaciously.

#### XIV

#### *At Floyd's Bar*

In the meantime William Wornum and Nora Perryman seemed to drift farther apart. He was as familiar and as cordial as before, but he was by no means as talkative. He sat for hours in the evening without uttering a word, save

when he was spoken to, and even then he vouchsafed but brief replies. His struggle was harder than he suspected it would be and his sacrifice far greater. Nor was he troubled much with the small flippancies of conversation. Nora herself grew strangely taciturn, and the querulousness of Miss Jane needed but small reply. But occasionally when he was sitting on the little porch alone with the blind girl he found it incumbent upon him to talk, though even then his conversation took strange turns. Tiny Padgett continued his visits, and the schoolmaster, who had grown wonderfully familiar with this unfortunate victim of circumstance, seemed never so happy as when listening to his homely humor.

"It's a pity, Miss Nora," said William Wornum one evening, "that you can't see the fireflies."

"I think not, Mr. Wornum," said Tiny Padgett, who was sitting in the darkest corner. "What are the fireflies to her?"

"What are they to any one?" replied the schoolmaster in a little heat.

"Nothing," said the other. "Absolutely nothing. They float in the air and flare up, and that is the last of them. They beat senselessly against the leaves of the trees and fly clumsily on their way, but their small pulsations of light only serve to make the night darker."

"They do the best they can," the schoolmaster persisted.

"O, I suppose so," remarked young Padgett. "The most of us do that. But what does it amount to, after all?"

"Only this," said Nora gently, "the best we can do is the most that is expected of us. I have never seen the fireflies and can form no conception of them, save that I know they strive to light up the night."

"But they fail," said the schoolmaster.

"After trying, yes. But is it their fault?"

"No," replied William Wornum. "I suppose if they had a limelight they would endeavor to turn it on. It is a great blessing to you, Miss Nora," he continued, recurring to some idea that had impressed itself upon his mind, "that you did not lose your eyesight after you became used to it. You have been spared an affliction."

"Affliction!" the girl exclaimed. "I think not. There is no affliction in blindness."

"Not to you, perhaps. But suppose it had come upon you gradually."

"I have often wished it had," she said, sighing gently. "Then I could remember the faces of my friends. I should know something of their appearance."

"Perhaps you would regret it," the schoolmaster suggested.

"No," she replied, "I cannot conceive of such a thing. They would never grow old to me. I might grow gray myself and gradually fade away, but my friends would remain ever young and fair."

"We all ought to be blind, then," said Tiny Padgett with sudden fervor.

"No," said the young girl; "we all ought to be satisfied."

"Well," responded the schoolmaster a little bitterly, "that is only another name for blindness. It is better to be blind."

"Yes," said Nora in a low tone; "it is better to be blind."

Whereupon Tiny Padgett, conceiving that he had been given a tough piece of philosophy to wrestle with, betook himself to Floyd's bar, where in a very short time he became personally interested in a game of poker and, dwelling continually upon the words of the young girl, played so recklessly and carelessly that he became the winner of a large sum. Vanderlyn dropped in while the game was in progress and laid a warning hand upon Padgett's shoulder, but it was all to no purpose. "I'm in for it now, Van," he said and continued the game.

While Vanderlyn stood watching the game a stranger lounged carelessly into the bar. He was an individual that would have attracted attention in any crowd. A fiery red scar shone where his eyebrows ought to have been, and his appearance was altogether forbidding. His voice was in keeping with his general appearance.

"Mix me up a tod, Tom," he said to Floyd. "It's d—n hot. I ain't seed no sich weather roun' these parts. Make 'er stiff, old man."

Vanderlyn did not turn around, but he recognized the

voice. It had spoken to him in the darkness that surrounded the lonely cabin of 'Cajy Cooper.

"Hello, Jim," exclaimed the barkeeper effusively. "You here?" It looks sorter like old times. But I tell you what, you better make yourself ska'ce. Weather like this the boys ain't to be depended on."

"O, they be durn!" said the other vehemently. "I bin a-hidin' out an' a-slippin' roun' tell there ain't no sense in it. Give us the tod, old man."

"I jest thought I'd drap a hint," said the other as he put the liquor out. "You kin take the chances if you want, but what I sez I sez wi' my mouth wide open. I don't speechify much; but I keeps up a mighty thinkin', an' I mighty nigh allers got one year open."

"I tell you what," said the man leaning against the counter carelessly, "what I done I done. I didn't make no bones un it. When they run up on me, sez I: 'Gents, I'm your man.' I wuz on the square. Sez I: 'Ef you let me 'lone, I'll let you 'lone.' An' now, ef they come houndin' arter me, a peaceable man, by God! they'll light into business. You needn't make no boast un it, ole man, but it's jest like I tell you."

To all appearance the man was half intoxicated. He spoke loud and boisterously, and his attitude as he leaned against the bar was one of defiance. A half-smoked cigar was stuck in his mouth, and his wool hat was crushed back upon his head. Perfect silence reigned in the room. It was the turn of Mr. George Wellington to deal. He sat facing Tiny Padgett, and Vanderlyn stood just behind him. Mr. Wellington dealt the cards leisurely and smoothly. The little bits of pasteboard slipped through his fingers as though they were oiled.

"Gentlemen," said Padgett after a little, "for the sake of the game I will call you. I have a queen full, with an ace at the head."

He laid down his cards and rose leisurely from his seat.

"One moment, gentlemen," he said and walked up to the man who was leaning against the bar. "Your name is Ashfield, I believe."

"That's what they called me when I was younger," replied the other somewhat defiantly.



"I would like to see you outside a moment," Padgett said.

The room had gradually filled with people, and in various portions thereof men were holding little whispered conversations.

"You want'er see me, eh?" asked Ashfield defiantly. "Well, you k'n jest stan' up an' look at me tell you git your fill."

By this time quite a crowd had gathered, and it was a very threatening crowd.

"The man is insane, Van," exclaimed Padgett; "absolutely insane."

As he spoke the young man turned to look at Vanderlyn, and he saw a sight he never forgot. Vanderlyn was standing erect gazing at Ashfield with an intensity that was almost devouring in its ferocity. Ashfield stood glaring back at the tall man with an expression of indecision upon his face something similar to that we sometimes see in animals. He was not a prepossessing man. Just above his eyebrows was a red scar that seemed burned into his forehead, and it seemed to flame out under the light of the candles like the mark of Cain. It was a most horrible-looking scar and gave to the man's face a singular expression of cruelty.

"Mr. Ashfield," said young Padgett, making one more effort to get the man away from the crowd, some of them drunk and all of them somewhat excited, "I would like to see you alone a few moments."

The crowd was not large; but Padgett perceived, as he remarked afterwards, that it had the elements of business about it, and he wanted to get Jim Ashfield away.

"It's no use, young man. You can't come that kinder game over me. You ain't gwineter git me out thar in the dark wi' this gang hangin' roun'."

"Well, there's this much about it," said a tall young fellow named Tump Spivey, "if you stay here, you'll git acquainted with a mighty rough set. If I was you, I'd take a walk."

Whatever else might be said of Jim Ashfield, he was not afraid.

"A d—n nice lot you've got here, Tom," he remarked to the barkeeper. "You keep 'em here to sorter set off the

place, don't you? You oughter rent 'em out to hang up in parlors."

There was a threatening movement in the crowd, but Vanderlyn interposed. He stepped up to Ashfield and laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I've been a-huntin' this man mighty nigh ten years, an' now I've found him. He's mine."

Ashfield looked at Vanderlyn, and the very scar on his face paled. The face of the stalwart man standing before him seemed to be a revelation. He would have shrunk away, but the hand of the other restrained him.

"Gents, this man'll murder me," he cried.

Vanderlyn laughed. "'Tain't my day for killin' folks," he said. "I wanter see you outside, Mr. Jim Ashfield."

The two went out into the moonlight, and those who were curious enough to watch them saw them sit down on the steps of the courthouse and engage in what appeared to be an earnest conversation. They sat thus for some time, and then Jim Ashfield arose and slunk away in the shadows. Vanderlyn remained, and the gray dawn of morning found him sitting where Jim Ashfield left him.

## XV

Thus the seasons drifted over Rockville. There was trouble, indeed, but it seemed to fall lightly upon the people to whom it has been the purpose of this brief chronicle to introduce you. It was blown away by the soft winds or dispelled by the generous sunshine. The days ran pleasantly into each other, and the seasons drifted together without clang or clamor. The schoolmaster, Miss Jane, Nora, and all were swept unconsciously into the future. The birds sang all around them, the wonderful birds; and the flowers bloomed, faded, and bloomed again. Only the sun and age were constant. The one shone steadily, and the other crept on apace, but both came upon Rockville serenely. Time dealt gently with the people who played their small parts and whose brief histories it has been my purpose to record here. It developed Jack into a manly youth and added, if such a thing were possible, to the marvelous beauty of Nora Perryman. It gave a touch of dignity to even Mr. Bagley's

careless profanity, and Vanderlyn himself seemed to gain something from the years. The school prospered, and the people were at peace.

"It's so danged quiet," said Mr. Bagley, tapping the counter of Floyd's bar gently and reflectively, "that it looks like makin' a fuss to take a drink er water." And Mr. Bagley, not being fond of making a row, took very little water.

Jim Ashfield had disappeared. The demonstration made in Floyd's bar, though not of a very riotous character, was sufficient to convince him that his presence was not desirable to the people, and he stayed away. Vanderlyn strayed through the woods, played with the children, and gave himself almost wholly up to the enjoyment of others. To quote again from Mr. Bagley, "He looked arter other people and hovered roun' Jack." He seemed to live and move as one in a quandary. A great change came over him. Whatever was weak received his sympathies, and he searched for helplessness that he might aid it, not obtrusively, but gently and delicately, the very refinement of kindness. He was exceedingly fond of visiting the Walthalls, and once he met Robert Toombs there. Those who meet this remarkable man now have little conception of either his power or his appearance. It is not true that age has dulled his intellect, but he has become more composed. His impulses are the same, but his ambition has been satisfied. He was a marvelous figure in his youth, fighting his way through the confusion of politics, and it is a figure that has become historical. I know of no fitter emblem of all that is distinctively Southern in nature, sentimental and suggestive, than a portrait of Robert Toombs as he appeared in 1850 and 1853. Probably I do not make my meaning clear, because I speak of him as an embodiment and not as an individual. He thus appeared to Vanderlyn, who was pleased with the imperious manners and dogmatic utterances of the man. A leader of men cannot even afford to give a hint of servility. A leader may be wrong, but he must be in earnest even in his errors. Dogmatism is the ultimate shape of truth, and imperiousness is merely a form of conviction. It is the one quality—perhaps I should call it an element—of the human mind that is never overtaken by insincerity.

I mention the fact of the meeting of these two men be-

cause it had great influence in bringing about the events which it is the purpose of this narrative—if it can be dignified by the name of narrative—to relate. Toombs was young, vigorous, and outspoken, and he gave his convictions the full benefit of the truths he thought they represented. It is probable he lacked the quality of repression, but it is certain that he lacked caution. But later, on a memorable occasion, he rose in the midst of an excited crowd of his countrymen (it was in Rockville, and Vanderlyn was one of the audience) and said: "Caution is a non-essential. Those who are right have no need to be cautious. Right will assert itself. Principle is deathless. I tell you here that principle can never die. It may involve the loss of life, of hope, of peace, and of everything that now seems to comfort us. It may even involve the loss of what people flippantly call honor. I know of nothing so honorable as upholding our convictions. We may deliver to our children the heritage of valor. We may leave to them the trashy endowment that gives traffic its importance and renders competition endurable. We may make them miserably poor or proudly poor; but we shall have made them grand and noble and powerful, indeed, if we have but convinced them that behind all legacies, all life, and all experience there is a principle to defend, if we but show them that there is something dearer than gain, something higher than greed. I tell you now that unless you stand up to yourselves and to your principles the trouble of strife will fall upon you. I do not see visions, nor do I dream dreams. No man is true to himself who cannot sacrifice himself. When there comes to be a lack of martyrs in the land, there will be a lack of patriots."

All this, eloquently spoken and passionately delivered, had a remarkable effect upon Vanderlyn. The entire oration was upon the duties of the people of the South; but the man who was struggling with a problem took no note of its general bearing. It seemed addressed to him; it seemed intended for him. He could not escape its conclusions; he could not reply to its arguments. He had no opportunity for thought and no time for any; but he recognized the fact that behind and beneath the fire and passion of that wonderful orator the pulse of truth was beating coolly, calmly, and

serenely. And afterwards, when the speaker was through and the people around him were discussing it, Vanderlyn seemed as eager to hear the comments as he had been to hear the discourse.

"I think," said Judge Walthall to William Wornum a little while afterwards, "that Toombs may succeed as a leader, but never as an organizer. The tendency of his thought is disorganization."

"I doubt this," replied William Wornum. "Is an architect who tears down a building that he may perfect it to be called a disorganizer? Those who prefer the whole truth to half truths have to wander in strange and devious ways. Truth sometimes leads to revolution."

"Is it not possible," asked the Judge, who was conservative in all his methods, "that what you speak of as truth is really fanaticism?"

"Possibly," said the other. "Those who have the courage to advocate what they believe to be right do not take the trouble to remember whether they are fanatics or not. Men who have convictions are generally fanatics, whether they are right or wrong."

"O well, as to that," said the Judge, "I am willing to admit that I was deeply impressed by Toombs's speech, but there is such a thing as indiscretion."

They were sitting in the wide veranda that ran around the Judge's house, and Vanderlyn was sitting with them.

"In doing what is right?" asked the schoolmaster.

"Not exactly that," answered Judge Walthall.

"You mean a man should not become the victim of his opinions?"

"Precisely so. He should not become a slave to his prejudices. That which is right in theory may be awkward, even wrong, in practice. At least it may be embarrassing."

"Then if it's hard to do right, we oughtn't to do it, I reckon," said Vanderlyn, straightening himself up a little.

"Why, we ought to do right, as a matter of course," answered the Judge.

"Well, now, Judge, supposin' in your younger days you had a brother, a wild sort of a young fellow who got into a row with you an' some others an' strayed off from home

before you knowed what kind of a man he was a-gwineter make."

"Well," replied the Judge, turning suddenly in his chair, "I did have a younger brother who wandered away from home in his youth. He was a little wild and reckless, but that was all. Did you ever meet him?"

"I reckon I have, Jedge. He wuz a mighty loose youngster when I knowed him fust."

The Judge rose and paced the floor. "You misjudge him," he said. "The fault was mine. But why have you alluded to him? He is dead."

"Well, jest this, Jedge. We wuz a-talkin' 'bout what's right an' what ain't right. S'pose that brother er you'n wuz to walk in on you some day. I don't say he's comin', but suppose he wuz to drop in on you. Would it be right for you to divide your property with him?"

The Judge paused in his walk. "Did you know my brother? He was very young when he left home. I have tried of late to remember him, but the remembrance is exceedingly vague. I know he had a terrible temper."

"When I knowed him," said Vanderlyn, laughing a little, "he didn't have no temper. He wuz mighty cool and calkylatin'."

Upon this Judge Walthall became very eager to learn something of the brother the memory of whom seemed almost a dream. But Vanderlyn professed to know but little, and his replies to the anxious questions of the Judge were anything but satisfactory. The schoolmaster, looking at the tall, brawny man and watching somewhat narrowly the placid, indifferent manner in which he replied to the eager inquiries, formed a theory of his own. But he was so astonished at the absurdity of his suspicions that he did not act upon the impulse that prompted him. He merely asked: "What was the name of this whimsical youth who could so far forget his duty as to leave his friends and his family?"

"I disremember now," said Vanderlyn, "but I think they called him Calhoun."

"That was his name," said the Judge, looking out over the fields.

"Is he dead?" asked the schoolmaster, watching Vanderlyn narrowly.

"He ain't so dead but what he might be brung to life," said the latter.

"Yes," said the Judge, "he is dead. He was wild and wayward, but he was not ungenerous. He was not unforgiving."

"But," remarked Vanderlyn, preparing to leave, "s'pose he sorter got 'shamed er his prank, s'pose he's a-fixin' up a plan that'll kinder make up for his shortcomings."

"Well," said the schoolmaster, "I think he is committing a very grave error."

"It is impossible," said the Judge; "he is dead."

## XVI

### *Catching Grasshoppers.*

"Why do you think your brother is dead, Judge?" asked the schoolmaster, watching Vanderlyn narrowly.

"It has been so long ago," answered Judge Walthall, toying with his watch fob somewhat nervously. "I cannot conceive how the indignation of a youth can perpetuate itself. He was a mere boy, a child almost, but very impetuous. I know now that it was wrong to endeavor to harshly restrain him in his boyish whims or to attempt to control his foolish fancies. But he was generous. In time he would either have forgotten or forgiven what he, lacking judgment, conceived to be an undue exercise of authority."

"Well," said the schoolmaster gravely, as if preparing to argue the matter, and still looking curiously, if not inquisitively, at Vanderlyn, "it is possible that it may have been otherwise. It may be that pride and not generosity is the cause of the singular absence of your younger brother. It may be that other circumstances have intervened. We cannot tell. It is not for us to judge. After all, he may be dead. But where the human heart is concerned, human judgment is at fault. You remember, Judge, that the old philosophers—and new ones too, for that matter—write long disquisitions on human motives and impulses, and we know no more of these than of the sprouting corn, and not so much. In nature like begets like, but in the human heart

one impulse begets another totally indifferent in kind and degree."

"I understand that," said the Judge sadly. "I understand that well enough; but at the same time I can conceive of nothing, no circumstance and no contingency, that could have intervened between my brother and his family when he had once come to understand his duties, when he had once come to discover that his future had been marred by boyish folly."

"This is true, Judge Walthall," said the schoolmaster, "according to our methods of reasoning, but our desires control our reasoning just as they control our appetites. Human nature, in every respect, is pure selfishness from beginning to end—or, I may say, pure vanity. None of us, of course, feel like analyzing the motives of martyrdom. But suppose they were analyzed. What then? We would all be surprised. Perhaps we would be mortified. At any rate, I believe we would be most grievously disappointed."

Vanderlyn arose, walked the length of the veranda, and sat down again. He seemed to be greatly troubled, and yet he yielded to the inclination to laugh a little at the rather odd direction the conversation had taken.

"Jedge," he said promptly, "this brother er yourn never went to school; he didn't have time. I knowed him mighty well," he continued as if calling to mind the appearance of some scene or picture. "I knowed 'im like he knowed 'isse'f," he went on, smiling in such a peculiar manner as almost to confirm the theory of the schoolmaster.

That same afternoon the fair Katherine Underwood, walking, as was her custom, under the spreading chestnut trees, heard her name called. She knew the voice was that of Vanderlyn, but such a change had seemed to come over it that she turned quickly to look. A change seemed to have come over the man. If possible, he walked more erect, and it seemed that he had gathered from some source new strength and new dignity.

"Miss Underwood," he said simply, "I would like to walk with you a few moments."

She noticed the change in his voice and manner, the change in his language. He was dressed more carefully than



usual, and his whole appearance had undergone some remarkable metamorphosis.

"Certainly, Mr. Vanderlyn," she said, coloring a little. She was astonished—more astonished, indeed, than if she had had no suspicions. It was a revelation she had predicted, but had not expected.

"You told me some time ago," his strong, firm voice sounding musical, "that you believed me to be masquerading. You were quite right, save that my masquerade is in some respects a serious one. I am in a quandary, and I come to you for advice. You are wise and good and true, and I know that whatever you may say to a wayfaring man, a stranger almost, will be just and kind."

And so the two, followed by Miss Underwood's smallest pupil, bearing an exaggerated bouquet of flowers in her little hands, wandered through the green dusk of the great woods, and Vanderlyn told his story. The little girl, playing with her grasses and flowers, gave little heed to the two. Whatever the nature of the story, its effect was lost upon her. She played in the sunshine, and the voices of the man and woman came to her as confused as the murmur of bees. But when Miss Underwood and the child, leaving Vanderlyn standing under the great trees, started homeward, the little girl saw with wonder that the lady was weeping, not as one in grief, but gently and quietly. Whereupon with childish sympathy she dropped her grasses and flowers and put her hand in that of her teacher; and then the woman, overcome by some sudden emotion, stooped and kissed the little one, and they went homeward hand in hand.

Vanderlyn stood where Miss Underwood had left him until the lady and the little girl had passed out of sight; and then he turned his steps toward the old church, whose spire shone in the sun. Here was the village cemetery, and through this Vanderlyn wandered until his attention was attracted by a woman placing flowers upon a grave. She was bareheaded. Her hair was disheveled, and her clothes were old and threadbare. It was 'Cindy Ashfield. She rose as Vanderlyn came forward.

He forgot to drop into the provincial dialect that had become habitual. The image of the schoolmistress, her tenderness, and her sympathy were still with him.

"'Cindy," he said, "do you remember me?"

"She raised her hands in the air as if in deprecation of the question and exclaimed: "Why, good Lord, Mr. Vanderlyn! I'd know you anywheres? I'll remember you to the day er my death. I wuz jest a-puttin' some flowers," she continued in a tone that conveyed the idea of an apology, "on the grave uv a little baby."

There was a pause. Vanderlyn glanced at the marble tablet. The name it bore was "CALHOUN WALTHALL." He stood like one in a dream. Finally he turned to the forlorn-looking woman and said:

"'Cindy, would you do me a favor?"

"I'd crawl on my knees fer you anywheres and any time."

Vanderlyn smiled a little. "I am going to ask you to do something that will be very hard for you to do," he said gently.

"'Twon't be hard for me," she replied. Then, a little more calmly: "When you want me, you jist call on me."

"Very well, 'Cindy. When I do, you must remember that it is not for my sake, but for yours, that I ask you to make a sacrifice. Have you seen your brother lately?"

"Jim? I ain't seen Jim since punkins wuz ripe. I heer tell that Jim's a-settin' up to a gal down 'bout Augusty."

"Well, suppose I should want him," asked the other. "What then?"

"O, he'd come. Where' he's tuk one resk, he'd take another. Jim ain't afeerd of snakes, I kin tell you." She was evidently proud of this vagrant brother of hers.

"I must see him before very long. If you can get word to him, I would be glad."

With a profusion of promises the woman picked up her faded old sunbonnet and disappeared through the fields that lay beyond the burying ground just as William Wornum came in sight, walking in a thoughtful mood.

"I was just thinking," he said without further greeting, "of that brother of Walthall's and the motive that prompted him to leave his friends and all he held most dear. He was a royal youth, no doubt. Where he couldn't reign he refused to abide."

Vanderlyn laughed. "I reckon he thought they wuz a-hummin' at 'im a little too lively," once more dropping

into the provincial speech. "Then, ag'in, maybe he didn't wanter be cooped up in the little house where he was borned; an' then maybe, arter he gotter wanderin' roun', he sorter liked the business."

"O, we can imagine any motive that controlled him. We can say that he had a streak of the vagabond in him and that he was weak enough to be influenced by it. But what I want to get at, if I can, is the real motive that controlled him. You knew him, I believe?"

"Passing well," said Vanderlyn in a tone that somewhat startled the schoolmaster. At least it is presumed that he was startled. He jumped up, slapped Vanderlyn on the shoulder, and laughed most immoderately. It was evident from this that amusement was thoroughly mixed with astonishment.

"Well, by George, Vanderlyn!" he exclaimed. "This is getting to be rich—in fact, I may say interesting. 'Passing well!' Upon my soul, it is curious how two little words like that will dispel a delusion."

"Well, now, schoolmaster," said Vanderlyn, "I tell you what, it's a mighty long lane that ain't got no turnin'."

The schoolmaster stopped him. "Come, now, this won't do. You must at least be candid with me."

"Candid!" exclaimed the other, laughing. "How could I propose to ask your advice in regard to a matter that touches me very nearly?"

"At any rate," replied William Wornum, grumbling over this as over other things, "you ought to have allowed me to point my moral. I was going on to preach quite a sermon about duty; but as this is a very intricate matter and involves much logic, I am glad to have the opportunity of foregoing the lecture. You have been spared an affliction. It was prepared beforehand. This changes matters. The royal duke will proceed to drop his mask and inform the audience what particular part he is playing. Hang it all, old fellow, let an agitated spectator come behind the scenes."

"Well, the truth is, Mr. Wornum," replied the other, straightening himself up a little, "I was about to ask your advice, and in this instance to ask your advice is to make a confession."

Which he proceeded to do, and the two sat talking until

long after darkness had fallen upon the scene—sat talking until Nora Perryman grew weary of listening for the schoolmaster's footsteps and until Jack grew weary of hunting for Dan. What they talked about and what they determined upon will be developed as this chronicle proceeds to a conclusion. Finally they arose, walked homeward through the shadows of the night, and parted at Miss Perryman's gate. Tiny Padgett, sitting over against the little cottage, pensively gazing in the direction of Nora's window, heard the two coming slowly along the street and caught a portion of the conversation.

"It will be a delicate undertaking," the schoolmaster was saying.

"But it must be undertaken all the same," Vanderlyn said.

"Yes," said the other, "that is my advice. But first we must find our man."

"That is my undertaking," said Vanderlyn. "I will find him. It may be a little troublesome, but I will find him."

They were about to part when Vanderlyn turned to the schoolmaster suddenly and said: "I am worried about Jack. This has troubled me all along. What will he say?"

"Of this you may be certain," the schoolmaster said, "whatever happens, you may be sure of Jack's love. Few boys love their fathers as Jack loves you. You may be assured of that."

"Well," said Vanderlyn, his strong voice faltering a little, "it's all for Jack's good, but it's hard. You can't imagine the way Jack and I get along."

"O yes, I can," replied the schoolmaster. "I thought it a little queer at first, but it is the best. I often envy you."

"Envy me?" asked the other in astonishment.

"Yes," said the other sadly. "I envy any man who is beloved."

And Nora, hearing the words and catching the sadness of the tone, arose from the window where she had been sitting and walked up and down through the darkness of her room, wringing her hands and weeping. And Tiny Padgett, sitting on the other side, stroked his mustache reflectively and came to the conclusion that he and the schoolmaster were in the same boat; for he could not penetrate the

darkness and behold the trouble of the fair young girl, nor could he look into the future and behold what was to come.

The two men parted, one going to his room and the other wandering aimlessly and thoughtfully under the elm and china trees, but both leaving young Padgett alone with the night. He sat there as silently as darkness itself. He sat there until the gray dawn shone as white as the ashes on his cigar; and then he arose, looking pale and haggard, and went toward his home, caring little for his forlornness, but thinking always of the blind girl he loved, but whose love he did not hope to win. He did not reach home. Upon the street near the courthouse he met Vanderlyn.

"We're having lots of fun, ain't we, old man? If the crash was to come now, we would be numbered among the early pilgrims. By the by, Van, I noticed to-night that you had ceased to talk like a stage driver. I told Miss Nora a long time ago that you were a humbug, but a good one."

"Tiny," said Vanderlyn, placing his hand upon the young man's shoulder in an affectionate way, "what are you doing wandering around this early in the morning?"

"Viewing nature," said the other gravely, "and hunting up great big humbugs like yourself. I also have a habit of driving grasshoppers through the dew. Their wings get damp, and they are easily caught."

Behind these light words Vanderlyn could see the signs of great mental suffering, and he sympathized most keenly with the wayward youth whose ultra-carelessness could not conceal his distress.

"The grasshoppers that you find at this hour," said Vanderlyn, "must be desperately early risers. They are probably hard to catch."

"They are never caught," replied Tiny. "Though there were legions of them, they would elude me."

"Ah! yes," said Vanderlyn, "they elude the best of us. They flutter into our hands and out again."

"They rise upon the wind," said Tiny, "and are blown out of reach."

"I cannot tell, but they seem to be worth striving after."

## XVII

*Thistledown Blown by the Wind*

Wandering through the streets of Rockville one afternoon, the schoolmaster was overtaken by young Reed. The latter was pale and excited, and he laughed nervously when the schoolmaster asked anxiously as to the condition of his health. Suddenly as they walked along the younger of the two turned and laid his hand upon the shoulder of the other. "I have asked Nora Perryman to marry me."

William Wornum had endeavored to prepare himself for such an emergency. He had endeavored to school himself so that he could smile serenely upon whoever made this announcement, and he partially succeeded, but in spite of himself his hand trembled as he grasped that of the other. "I suppose I must congratulate you," he said simply.

"No," replied the other bitterly; "it is Miss Nora whom you must congratulate."

"And why not you?"

"Upon my failure?"

William Wornum, looking at his friend narrowly, read upon his handsome face the disappointment of an unsuccessful lover.

"You don't mean to say," he asked, stopping short, "that she has refused you?"

"I mean just that," replied the other.

"Well," said the schoolmaster, "you must never give up. Maybe she is only teasing you. Women know how to tantalize, especially young women. You will have to try again."

"No," said Reed, "she is not playing with me. She was very kind and very gentle, but very much in earnest. She gave me to understand," he continued, "that she loves some one else. It must be Padgett."

"Impossible!" said the schoolmaster.

"Why impossible?"

"He is utterly unworthy of her love."

"As a matter of course, but what has love to do with worthiness or unworthiness?"

"It has everything to do with it," replied the schoolmaster.

The young lawyer laughed. "It has everything to do with it and nothing," he said. "If you feel in the humor," he

said grimly, "we will go out here in the woods and make the matter a subject of debate. I do not know of a more appropriate theme. I shall insist that love is utterly independent of every motive and every incident of human life, and you will hold that it is not. We shall have a good deal of amusement, no doubt."

The schoolmaster observed that the young man's tone was full of bitterness, and he made some feeble effort to console his friend, dwelling upon the probability that her rejection of his suit was merely the result of a girlish whim.

"Why, Wornum, do you think I could be mistaken in a matter of this kind? If she had smiled, if there had been any hesitation in her manner, I should have dreamed of a possibility; but she seemed to be full of sorrow that she should be compelled to disappoint me."

"Do you remember her words?" asked the schoolmaster.

"Perfectly. 'Mr. Reed,' she said, 'I regard you as a very dear friend, but I cannot love you as a wife should love her husband.' I can tell you no more," said Reed. "That is sufficient."

"Yes," said William Wornum, "that is quite sufficient." But he determined in his own mind that it was not sufficient, and he concluded to investigate the matter. He saw Nora that evening. She was sitting in the porch when the schoolmaster went home, and he lost no time in approaching the subject.

"Nora," he said, "what is this about young Reed? Are you prejudiced against him?"

"Not in the least. On the contrary, I regard him as a very dear friend, nothing more."

"He has asked you to become his wife?"

"Yes."

"And you refused?"

"Yes."

"I am an old friend. Would you mind telling me why?"

"You might as well ask me, Mr. Wornum, why the wind blows from the east or the north instead of from the south and west. I only know that I do not love him. Why, I cannot tell. I am very sorry."

"Yes," said the schoolmaster; "so he said. He said he was touched by your sympathy."

"Did he ask you to come to me, Mr. Wornum?" the young girl asked so coolly that it somewhat embarrassed the school-master.

"No; I came on my own accord. He is my friend. He is noble, generous, and brave. Few men's lives are so pure. I believe you could aid him to make a great career."

"You talk like a lawyer, Mr. Wornum. Mr. Reed should congratulate himself that he has such able counsel."

Her tone and manner were cold. It seemed to the school-master that the petulant girl whom he used to tease had suddenly grown out of his recollection. The serenity of womanhood seemed to have settled upon Nora; but, somehow or other, it occurred to the man who was talking to her that the sudden dignity with which she had cloaked herself was nearly allied to sorrow.

"In a matter of this kind, Nora," he replied gravely, "I am, of course, counsel for you as well as for my friend."

"Did your friend ask you to appear in his behalf?"

"No, no! Nothing like that. I came of my own accord. I came in the interest of two very dear friends. Perhaps I have made a mistake."

"You certainly have made a mistake, Mr. Wornum."

"Well," he said lowering his voice, "I know you will pardon me. I am unfortunate. We are all liable to make mistakes."

He went to the window and looked out over the green fields. The whole world seemed stretched out before him. It was the future, he thought, and it appeared to invite him.

"I am sorry to have troubled you," he said presently. "But it is a small matter, after all. We have been friends since you were a little girl. I remember as well as if it were yesterday the first time I saw you. I should be glad to go over all the old days again. I would be glad for you to recall them now, for in searching your memory you can tell me where I have been unkind or even thoughtless. I want you to forgive me."

He turned and saw that she was weeping as though her heart would break, and he stood watching her a little while. Presently he said, and his tone was very gentle: "I am going away shortly, and it will be pleasant to know that you do not remember me unkindly."



"Going away!"

"Yes, I am going to Europe. By the time I return time will have made vast changes, and I do not care to go away with the impression that I have been unkind to any of my friends."

"You have not been unkind to me, Mr. Wornum."

"And yet I have wounded your feelings," he replied.

"No," she said, "you have not wounded me. You do not understand."

"I am afraid not," he answered. "I do things very awkwardly. I am sometimes amazed at my own stupidity. When Reed told me that you would not marry him, I concluded that he was laboring under a delusion, and I came to you in his behalf."

"He was laboring under no delusion, Mr. Wornum. How could you possibly believe I was trifling with him?"

"Well," he said, "you know how women are. There is an old saying that 'A woman's will is the wind's will.'"

"The will of a true woman, Mr. Wornum, can neither be blown about by the wind nor bleached by the sun."

"It should not be," he said, "but it often is. We cannot tell. The best we can do is to make a mistake and then correct it. I have made a mistake and have attempted to correct it."

"You have corrected it, Mr. Wornum."

"I should not have made it," he answered.

"That is true. You have known me for years, and yet you seemed to believe me capable of trifling with the feelings of your dearest friend."

"Yes," said the other. "I am unaccustomed to these things. I could not see how a young girl could throw away such a heart as Emory Reed could offer."

"But what of the girl's? Suppose she had none to give him in return?"

"I had an intimation of that," he answered, "but I did not believe it. I cannot understand how love can be bestowed unworthily."

"Unworthily, Mr. Wornum?"

"Yes, I cannot understand, for instance, how a woman could come to prefer Tiny Padgett to Emory Reed." He was apparently determined to cross-examine her.

"And pray, Mr. Wornum, who has such a preference?" She spoke as coldly as at first. "Which of your lady friends has expressed herself as preferring Tiny Padgett to Emory Reed?"

"O, none. I am only drawing a comparison. I was thinking of such a possibility. And yet it is possible that in some woman's mind, some woman who knows little of the world, the two might be rivals, and her choice might alight upon Padgett."

"And if it did?" asked Nora. "I will say to you frankly, Mr. Wornum, that of the two men I greatly prefer Mr. Padgett. Do you wish to know why?"

"I have no right to know," he answered.

"I have a right to tell you," raising her hand in the air as if to brush away something in the air about her. "I like him," she continued, "because he knows what trouble is; because with all his faults he is gentle, tender, and thoughtful of others."

"And because he loves you."

"I am glad he does," she cried impetuously.

The schoolmaster had never seen her so excited, and he thought that Padgett must be fortunate indeed to have won the esteem of such a woman. It was a problem he could not solve, and yet how easy it was of solution! To this girl the rumors of Padgett's excesses, the talk of his wickedness, was as thistle blown upon the wind. She only knew of his gentleness. He was wont to say to himself that he left his waywardness at the door of the little cottage, and he did leave it there. Sin dropped from him like a garment when he entered the gate; and the blind girl only knew of him that he was gentle, tender, considerate, and always disposed to disparage himself.

"I can understand that," said the schoolmaster, replying to her exclamation; "but are you not glad that Emory Reed loves you?"

"Yes," she said quietly. "I am glad, but that is all."

#### XVIII

The schoolmaster passed out of the room and went into the street. He did not look at Nora as he turned to go, or

he would have seen how pale she was and how tightly her hands were clasped together. She stood thus and heard the gate shut behind him and then the sound of his footsteps as he passed up the street, until finally all was silent. Then she went slowly to her room and sat by the window. It was her favorite position when she felt in the mood for thought or when anything troubled her. The afternoon waned. The sun, a great red globe of fire, hung suspended for a moment in the mists that veiled the horizon and then sank slowly out of sight. The gray twilight deepened into dusk, and the dusk made way for her mistress, Night. But still Nora sat at the window. Miss Jane looked in once, but spoke no word. She thought the girl was in one of her "tantrums," as she forcibly expressed it, and she went away. The night, accompanied by sad stars, drifted steadily toward the pale morning. The moon, an awkward crescent, peeped for a moment over the hills and then moved steadily up the dark skies. Aroused, perhaps, by some mimic dreams, a mocking bird flew upward out of a bush in the garden and, fluttering a moment in the air, dropped back upon its perch and broke into a song of wondrous melody, strength, and variety, but the marvelous execution of the bird was lost upon Nora. She sat at the window thinking, thinking, always thinking, and the burthen of her thoughts was always the same: "He is going away!" She knew now why she had listened for the schoolmaster and why in the pleasant evenings it had been her delight to sit quietly by while he wove his strange fancies—learned, quaint, or foolish—into words.

Nora knew she loved him, but this knowledge gave her neither pain nor uneasiness. Indeed, she was comparatively happy. No thought of a change ever occurred to her, and she was content as long as matters remained as they were. Therefore, when the knowledge came to her that William Wornum was going away, the shock it gave her surprised even herself. For a moment she was paralyzed, the next she was wondering why, and then she found herself quietly conversing with the schoolmaster. Whereupon she wondered why she was so calm and was then surprised that she had thought of anything else save that he was going away.

Sitting thus, thinking of the trouble that had come to her,

she heard the sound of voices. It came nearer and nearer, and presently she was able to distinguish the words.

"It's pretty late, I reckon," said one, which she knew to be Vanderlyn's.

"Past two o'clock," said the other, which she knew to be William Wornum's.

"Well," said the first, "we've got that business all arranged, and nothing remains except to fetch the man to law."

"That is all," said the other; "and the sooner it is over, the better for me. I propose to take a long journey. I am going to Europe." They had slowly drawn nearer to Miss Perryman's cottage; and if the eyes of the blind girl had possessed the power of vision, she could have seen the two standing in the moonlight, the one tall and burly and the other tall and slender.

"Going to Europe!" said Vanderlyn, laughing. "That is a mighty nice name for a schoolhouse. Why didn't you think of it before?"

"It is a wide schoolhouse that I am going to," said William Wornum with a sigh that was echoed by the fair young girl at the window, "a schoolhouse in which I hope to unlearn much that I have learned and to forget all that troubles me here."

Vanderlyn was struck by the peculiarly sad tone of the schoolmaster. "Well, look here. By George, Wornum! You can't be in earnest, can you? Ain't this rather sudden?"

The answer sent a thrill through the bosom of the young girl.

"I made up my mind this afternoon."

"Well, this is a pretty come-off!" exclaimed the other.

"I need rest," continued the schoolmaster, not heeding the exclamation of his companion, "and there is no rest for me here. Repression is worse than death to me. It is a sort of mental executioner that is all the time whetting his ax right before your eyes. For weeks I have been undergoing the tortures of a prisoner who looks through the bars of his dungeon and sees the gallows upon which he is to be hung gradually taking shape. I tell you, it is terrible, terrible!" He gave such emphasis to the last word as might be

expected from a man in the deepest distress, and Nora shrank away from the window as if some one had struck her a blow.

"I think I understand," said Vanderlyn gently.

"No," cried the other passionately, "you can't understand; you know nothing about it, nothing whatever. If you knew it, you would not believe it."

Vanderlyn laughed. "Well, I'm a mighty good guesser, Wornum. But what you want to pack up and run off for is more than I can make out."

"Let me put a case to you," replied the schoolmaster eagerly. "I want to appeal to your judgment. Suppose a man, unattractive and awkward, is fool enough to fall in love with a woman he knows will never regard him other than a friend. He is thrown with her every day until finally his love becomes maddening"—

"How did you know?" asked Vanderlyn suddenly in a strangely repressed tone.

"Know what?"

"Why, about—about this man."

"I don't understand you."

"O, I thought you might have seen something. Come, now, Wornum," appealingly, "don't be joking me on that score. I know I'm an ass, but that's a sore subject you are on now. Let's drop it. Are your crops good this year?"

Nora, sitting in the window, smiled, in spite of her own troubles, at the ludicrous tone of embarrassment in Vanderlyn's words.

"Why, you must be crazy, Vanderlyn," said the schoolmaster, astonished beyond measure.

"You may be shooting at a mark in the dark, Wornum, but you're hitting it every time plumb center."

"Then perhaps the target may sympathize with the marksman. Well," after a pause, "suppose the case is like I tell you. Would you advise the man to go to the woman and tell her what a fool he is?"

"No," said the other quietly; "I can't say I would."

"What would you advise him to do, then?"

"I think your remedy is the best."

"What remedy?"

"Why, to pack up and go off."

"O, I didn't"—

"And I know a man that proposes to try it," continued Vanderlyn, ignoring the schoolmaster's interruption.

"And pray who is he?"

"Your Uncle Dan."

The schoolmaster laughed a little at this blunt confession. "Well, Uncle Dan," said he, "you'll have company. But in the meantime we'll see about this little business of ours, and then we'll talk about this other matter."

"Yes," said Vanderlyn, "and we won't be long about it. When does the Superior Court meet?"

"The first Monday in next September."

"Then the man we want will be on hand."

"I trust you are sure of this," said the schoolmaster. "I can't stand the strain much longer."

"O, I'll have him here; you may depend on that."

"Very well. Good night."

"And pleasant dreams?" asked Vanderlyn cheerily.

"No, no!" said the schoolmaster a little bitterly. "We want no pleasant unrealities."

And so they parted.

The young girl sat in the window. Her grief had given way to elation; and while the tremulous tide of stars drifted westward and the gray dawn began to weave a silver veil over the face of the moon, she wondered if she were really beloved of this man, the schoolmaster.

## XIX

### *The Dawning of the Day*

He was going away! A bird stirred and chirped in the hedge of Cherokee roses that had grown up and hidden the garden fence. The dusky silence of dawn was broken. The wind rose, shook its invisible wings, and sent its messengers abroad. They came in at the window and gently played with the golden hair of the girl. They went among the trees and rustled the velvety leaves of the mulberry tree in the garden and scattered the dead rose leaves upon the ground. He was going away! The yellow moon grew white and cold, and the morning star glistened a moment

upon the blushing bosom of the east and disappeared. A swallow twittered overhead, and, lo! the day had come.

How long after this Nora sat at the window she did not know, but she was aroused by the shrill voice of her sister in the yard below.

"Well, the Lord 'a' massy! Look at dem chickens! I 'lay if Mary Ann Pritchett don't keep her fowls at home, I'll have their heads in the pot." And then, after a deal of ineffectual "shooing" and various snappish remarks: "Ben, O Ben! Come out er thar, you lazy villain, an' take a rock an' kill them chickens. I declar' to grashus ef it ain't enough to aggrivate a saint! Fust it's the niggers, an' then it's the chickens, an' then it's the wimmen. Thar ain't no peace nowheres. You, Ben!" in a higher key. "Why in the name of goodness don't you cum outer thar an' kill them chickens? Mary Ann Pritchett's old roster's tore up eve'y squar' in the gyarden."

But by the time Uncle Ben came out, chuckling and making excuses, Jack had appeared upon the scene and sent the frightened fowls in every direction.

"Ef it wuzzent fer that boy," Miss Jane remarked complacently, "the whole blessed place would go to rack and ruin."

"Mars Jack mighty peart, dat's a fact," assented Uncle Ben with unction.

"Don't come a-talkin' to me," said Miss Jane severely. "Ef you'd 'a' bin wuth your salt, them chickens wouldn't 'a' scratched up the whole place."

"Why, Mistiss, how you 'spec' I gwineter keep dem chickens out 'fo' day? Hit 'pears unto me dat dey roosted out dar 'mong de pea vines. Folks ain't got no bizness wid chickens 'less dey takes an' clips der wings. Dat's w'at I say, an' dat's w'at I'll stick unto."

"I dessay," replied Miss Jane sarcastically; "frum the way you git aroun' lately I reckon somebody's clipped your wings."

"Mistiss, you's one sight. Nobody ain't been foolin' 'long er me, an' dey ain't gwineter, 'cepen a spasm er sumpin ketches me in de middle er de road."

"Where you goin' to loaf at to-day besides Floyd's corner?"

"Mars Daniel Vanderlyn say he want me fer to go wid him."

"An' where's he goin'? It looks to me that he'd had plenty er traipsin' roun'."

"I dunno'm. He des say he want me fer to go 'long er him, an' I tole him I'd ax you."

"O, you kin go," said Miss Jane in a relieved tone. "You kin go. I don't want you piddlin' roun' here worryin' the life outer me."

"You ain't heerd the news, is you, Mistiss?" inquired Uncle Ben, as if to change the subject.

"What news?"

"'Bout Mars Willium gwine to Yurup."

"Gwine where?"

"Dat's what I hears. Gwine ter Yurup."

"Who was tellin' you?"

Uncle Ben hesitated. "I wuz stirrin' up de roots ter dem dar mornin'-glories yistiddy, an' I hear Mars William tell young Mistess dat he wuz gwine 'way."

"What else did you hear?" asked Miss Jane, her suspicions aroused and her curiosity whetted.

Nora, sitting in the window, shrunk back, pale and frightened. O, if she could but raise her finger at the garrulous old negro! But Ben was prudent. He worshiped his young mistress, and he would have toiled day and night to have spared her one pang.

"I dunno'm," he said presently. "Dey talked right smart-ually, an' den Mars Willium he says he want some res' an' dat he wuz gwine away."

Nora could have hugged the old man. From that day he never wanted for anything that she could supply; and upon one occasion, after calling his attention to the conversation which I have just chronicled, she said: "I am under obligations to you, Uncle Ben."

He grinned from ear to ear. "Dey don't git fur ahead er de ole nigger, sissy"—he always addressed her as "sissy"—"an' when dey does, dey gotter git up 'fo' de sun done in sight, sho's youer born."

This was long afterwards. For the present Miss Jane was interested in the intention of the schoolmaster, and she continued her cross-examination of Uncle Ben.



"You say you heard him tell your Miss Nora he was goin' away?"

"Yes'm. Dat's w'at he said. He spoked it right out loud. Hit sorter soun' like he wuz sorry, and it sorter soun' like he wuzzent."

"What'd Nora say?"

"I dunno'm. I wuz so flurried when I hear dat Marse William was gwineter sail out an' lef' us dat I disremembers w'at passed arterwards."

There wasn't much to be got out of Ben, but Miss Jane had heard enough to cause her to put on her "thinking cap," as she expressed it. First she went to Nora.

"What's all this stuff 'bout William Wornum going away?"

"I'm sure I don't know, sister. He merely told me he was going."

"Didn't he say why?"

"He said he needed rest; that was all."

"Rest, fiddlesticks! He gits more rest now than a settin' hen. He needs work, that's what he needs. If he'd go out into the woods an' split five hunderd rails a day fer forty days, he wouldn't come a-talkin' about rest. My goodness! How kin a man rest when he don't work? That's what I want to know."

Just then she heard the footsteps of the schoolmaster himself and hurried downstairs to meet him. Miss Jane was not a woman to mince matters, and she had upon her tongue's end a very sharp lecture for William Wornum's benefit; but it was forgotten as soon as her keen eye rested upon his pale, careworn face. He seemed to have grown old in a night. He had seated himself in the parlor with a book; but he rose and smiled as Miss Jane entered—but such a weary ghost of a smile!

"What in the name of gracious is the matter with you, William?"

"With me, Miss Jane? If there is anything the matter with me, I have yet to be notified of the fact. What does it appear like to you?"

"Why, you look like a man that had the fever an' ager a year."

"Likely enough," he said simply; "likely enough," he re-

peated musingly. "I did feel a little chilly yesterday and last night."

"Well, you better go to bed right now, an' I'll make you some red-pepper tea."

"No," he replied; "a little walk in the sun will put me to rights. I have work to do."

"What's this about your going away, William?" asked Miss Jane.

"Nothing," he answered, "except that I must have rest and a change. I can't stand this strain much longer."

"Miss Jane looked at him steadily. "William Wornum, ef it wuzzent jes' for manners' sake, I'd say you wuz a start natural fool."

"Your diagnosis would be the correct one, Miss Jane; but it is so easy to be a fool that I have forgotten whether it is a habit or a disease. I am inclined to think, however, it is a disease—at least in my case."

Something in his own mind or something in the appearance of Miss Jane as she stood regarding him with a frown on her face must have amused him, for he laughed heartily, somewhat after the old fashion, and while he was laughing Nora came in. She was pale; but the schoolmaster, looking up, thought her more beautiful than ever. She was no longer a girl; she was a woman, and she seemed to exult in the knowledge of the fact.

"Good morning, Mr. Wornum. Mrs. Dusenberry says it is a sign of bad luck for one to laugh before breakfast."

"Good morning, Nora. I dare say Mrs. Dusenberry is about right. But one who has no luck—good, bad, or indifferent—can very well afford to laugh, even before the sun is up. It has a tendency, I find, to give an appetite. I have seen it stated that a man may harden his muscles and improve his health by merely imagining that he practices with dumb-bells every morning. If this be true—and I have no doubt it is—I can laugh to my heart's content and still imagine I am lucky." His old manner seemed to have come back to him. "There is no want," he continued in the half-frivolous, half-humorous, and wholly characteristic vein that was at once the puzzle and the delight of his friends, "there is no want," he continued, "that the imagination cannot supply. People who are starving sit down in their

dreams to tables loaded with food. Thirst is quenched, love satisfied, and even grief becomes dumb."

"O, but those are dreams, Mr. Wornum!" said Nora.

"True. But it is only in the wide, dim halls of sleep that the unfettered mind can render itself wholly to the grotesque spell of the imagination. I have sometimes thought," he went on with a sigh, "that sleep is the soul's vacation. All day long it frets and pines for freedom, until finally sleep unbars the prison door."

"It's a mercy," remarked Miss Jane with considerable emphasis, "that the asylum ain't far from here."

"I am told," he said gravely, "that it is a very quiet place, a place where people attend strictly to their own business and never interfere with each other. At any rate, they do have their own private reasons for it, and under the circumstances they are to be excused."

"You speak as one who had beheld visions, Mr. Wornum," said Nora.

"Aye, and dreamed dreams," he answered. "Little children smile in their sleep. As they grow older they cry out. I do not know of anything more fatal to content than knowledge and experience. They are conspirators against happiness. Where they make one philosopher they educate ten fools to harass him, and the odds are that even the philosopher will degenerate into a mountebank."

"You are quite a cynic to-day, Mr. Wornum."

The schoolmaster was puzzled at the tone of exultation that seemed to ring and quiver in Nora's voice. It was so much at variance with the womanly composure with which she seemed suddenly to have clothed herself. He paused a moment to study her face and then went on: "A cynic is one who tells disagreeable truths. I think I have said nothing disagreeable."

"Stuff, William Wornum!" said Miss Jane vigorously. "Youer gittin' light-headed. What you want is er cup of pepper tea, an' you want it hot. The quicker you git to bed, the better. You'll need right smart rest ere you git to Yurup."

"No," said he, "I want to go out into the sunshine and stretch myself."

"Well, we're not going to wait breakfast for you, I can tell you that," Miss Jane remarked.

"I am not suffering with hunger," he replied and went out.

At the gate he met Vanderlyn, whose face wore a very serious expression.

"I was just coming after you, Wornum. Look at these." He held up a handful of charred lightwood splinters.

"Well?"

"I found them under the corner of my shop. They are warm yet."

"What does it mean?" asked the schoolmaster.

"It means," said Vanderlyn quietly, "that if they had kept on burning, the probability is you would have been raking about in the ashes to discover my bones."

"Why, this is infamous!" exclaimed the schoolmaster excitedly. "What can it mean?"

"It means," said the other, "that I have a friend who is very attentive. I am not sure, but I think that if Jim Ashfield would call and leave his card, this"—holding up the splinters—"would be about the size of it."

## XX

### *Is the World So Wide?*

There had undoubtedly been an attempt to fire Vanderlyn's shop. Lightwood splinters had been placed under his bedroom, which was in the rear of the building, and these had been fired by the incendiary. It was only by the merest accident that the attempt was not successful. The kindling had been hastily and, therefore, clumsily arranged, and to this was due the fact that the flames which had charred the incendiary's fuse were not communicated to the old wooden structure. The two men examined the place and its surroundings carefully and compared notes.

"Why do you think Ashfield is the man?" said the schoolmaster presently.

"It is merely a suspicion," answered the other. "I have suspected the man ever since I jerked him out of that crowd in Floyd's bar. I think he owes me a grudge for that. It may be that he has got an inkling of my business here, but

that doesn't seem reasonable, and yet," Vanderlyn continued thoughtfully, "he is a very shrewd man."

"Perhaps," suggested the schoolmaster, "in your talk with him the night you took him out of the hands of the boys you let fall some hint"—

"No," said Vanderlyn quickly, "I was very careful. I talked very little. I simply let him tell his own story in his own way. I did not so much as cross-examine him. I led him far enough to make sure I was not mistaken, and then I left him. Maybe I do him injustice; but, somehow or other, I thought of him as soon as I awoke and found my room full of smoke."

"If it is his work," remarked William Wornum, "you have gained a point."

"How?"

"Why, you know he can't be far away."

"O, I'm sure of him, anyway. He will be forthcoming," said Vanderlyn confidently.

"That remains to be seen."

"Well, I think myself," laughing a little, "that the sooner we make sure of the matter, the better."

"If this is his game," said the schoolmaster gravely, "you must proceed at once. He is dangerous. It won't do to be sleeping over a matter like this," looking curiously at the spot where the feeble flames, seeking something to devour, had left the black trace of their fiery tongues upon the corner of the house. "But, after all," he continued, "I am almost afraid to believe it is he."

"Well, you needn't be scared about that, Wornum. Whether it's him or not, I am getting tired of waiting for developments. We might as well be on the safe side by hurrying through with the whole business."

As the two men stood talking together Kate Underwood passed along on the opposite side of the street. The schoolmistress clung fondly to most of her New England habits, and among these was a love for open-air exercise. She would get up between four and five o'clock in the summer time and make long excursions through the fields and over the hills that intervened between Rockville and the wilderness of great woods that lay beyond. This habit of hers astonished the easy-going inhabitants at first and then

amused them; but they finally became accustomed to what they were pleased to term the "eccentricities" of the beautiful Yankee woman, and some of them finally went so far as to allow their daughters to accompany her, which was quite a concession on the part of these sturdy citizens, whose opposition to utilitarianism in all its forms was antique in its aggressiveness, albeit it went under the name and in the guise of conservatism. There was Bagley. Bagley would have told you, without waiting even for the mild formality of a nod or a wink, that "these dad-blamed newfangled notions they er gittin' up is a-ruinin' the country teetotally."

"I'm danged," he used to remark to the boys who gathered in the piazza of the tavern Sunday afternoons, "I'm danged ef 'tain't gittin' so a feller don't know what's a-gwine-ter turn up. We're havin' something new ever' day, an' the world is a-populatin' more and more; but I disremember when we wuz wuss off—I does, gents, for a solid fac'. I leave it to John Bell ef these railroads ain't a-bustin' me up. I useter haul folks plum' to Macon, but now I'll be dad-blamed ef I kin git a passenger to Golyin's Crossin'. You kin whoop up your steam an' your enventions, gents, but I'll jes' be dad-fetched ef money don't git sca'cer ever' day. Look at cotton; look wher' it's gone to."

Bagley, you perceive, was conservative; and, in a somewhat modified form, his conservatism was typical. But all this had no place in the thoughts of the schoolmistress as she walked briskly past the two men, nodding and smiling to each. Vanderlyn broke abruptly away from the schoolmaster, walked across the street, and joined the fair Katherine.

"You are out early," said Vanderlyn.

"O no; I overslept myself this morning. I am rather late. But, pray," glancing at the pine splinters and laughing merrily, "what is that you have got?"

Vanderlyn looked at his smutty hand, which still held the kindling, and blushed like a girl. The schoolmistress had never seen him so embarrassed. He had forgotten that he still held them in his hand.

"O, these? These are nothing but some little pieces of lightwood I picked up."

"I have heard," said Miss Underwood in a serio-comic tone, "that lightwood splinters properly steeped in whisky

make an excellent tonic. Do they have to be burned, Mr. Vanderlyn? I should think that fire would be fatal to the medicinal virtues of the pine."

"Well, I will tell you the truth, Miss Underwood," he said, looking straight into the depths of her sparkling eyes. "I found them under my shop. Some one has complimented me by endeavoring to burn my little effects and me along with them."

The schoolmistress turned as white as a sheet. "The black-hearted wretch!" she cried, clutching her hands nervously. "O, how can any one be so cruel? Do you know who it was?"

"Why, no, not precisely," answered Vanderlyn, controlling with an effort the embarrassment which her tone and manner had occasioned. "I couldn't come right out and say for certain who made the attempt, but I reckon I could come within one of it. There is but one man in the wide world who could have the motive for such a crime."

"Who is he?" asked the schoolmistress eagerly.

"He," replied Vanderlyn, "is my friend Jim Ashfield."

"I knew it!" she exclaimed. "I knew it! I saw him this morning. He is the man; he and no other. I shuddered when he passed me."

"If he is the man," said Vanderlyn, with something like a sigh of relief, "the occurrence is a fortunate one for me. The problem that has been worrying me, and that I told you about, has solved itself. But it will be a great trial to me; and after it is all over, my only remedy is to go away. Worried and myself have arranged for a trip to Europe."

She had stopped when he told her of the attempt to burn the house; and the two now stood on the sidewalk, she self-poised and eager, swinging her dainty parasol, and he calm and cool, leaning against an elm tree. Waiting for her to speak, he raised his eyes to her face. She was looking away to the west, where numberless snow-white cloud ships were sailing the upper seas. She seemed suddenly to have lost interest in the attempt of the would-be incendiary; and but for a certain pensive expression, vague and yet tangible, her features would have struck Vanderlyn as cold and naughty.

"We leave in September," he continued, more for the purpose of continuing the conversation than anything else.

"Wornum needs a change, and so do I. Nothing cures restlessness like moving from post to pillar."

Kate Underwood waved her parasol in the air as though she would thereby destroy an unpleasant vision. "The world is a wide world, Mr. Vanderlyn," she said after a little. "It is a pity."

"What is a pity, Miss Underwood?"

"That the world should be so wide."

"It is none too wide for those who try to escape from their troubles," he answered.

"People who are brave and unselfish generally face their troubles. O, if I were a man!" she exclaimed vehemently.

"You would do as men do, Miss Underwood. There are some troubles," he said gently, "that the bravest men dare not face."

"I am to understand, then, that your troubles are all arranged upon a magnificent scale. I thought you had solved the problem that had been perplexing you of late."

"It isn't that. If I have acted a lie, it has been for the sake of others. Circumstances have justified me. My conscience is clear. I would cheerfully play the part over again. It is not that."

"I suppose it would be impolite for me to question you," she said, smiling a little. "You have heard about the native curiosity of women."

"It would not be impolite," he made answer.

"Well, then, what is it?" she asked almost eagerly.

"If the circumstances were different," he answered with a smile, a sad smile as she thought, "if Providence had been a little kinder, I would not hesitate to tell you fully and freely. As matters stand, you of all women should be the last to know." Gazing upon her, he saw the red blood rise to her face and flow away again; and, blundering, as all men do, he did not even suspect that he had already told her all she desired to know.

"Am I, then, so unsympathetic as to be proscribed?" she asked, tossing her head prettily in order the more effectually to conceal her embarrassment; and then with a little coquettish air that seemed absolutely ravishing to the great tall man beside her: "I should like very much to be told. I



know it must be something very mysterious and very romantic, or you wouldn't hesitate so."

"O, I'm not hesitating," he answered, laughing at the idea. "There is nothing to hesitate about. I cannot tell you."

"You will change your mind, Mr. Vanderlyn."

"When I do, Miss Underwood, you will be the first to know—and the last too, for that matter."

"That would be nice," she rejoined, "to have your mysterious secret all to myself." Her tone and manner were altogether foreign to her, and it puzzled him.

"Mind that man, Mr. Vanderlyn," she said. "He is dangerous. The sooner you dispose of him, the better."

"Trust me for that," he said lightly and went his way.

## XXI

Upon reaching her room, Miss Kate Underwood acted somewhat singularly—that is to say, somewhat after the manner of women. She snatched her bonnet from her head, flung it on a chair, strode in front of her mirror, and looked at the pleasing reflection of herself long and seriously. Then she flushed and fell to laughing. The whole proceeding was impromptu and to a spectator would probably have been entertaining, but not instructive; for who can understand a beautiful woman? Who can study her peculiarities with profit? The student becomes a lover and the lover a fool. There were no students of human nature at hand, however, to take note of the remarkable antics of Kate Underwood upon this particular occasion, else they had been sorely puzzled. Her fit of hilarity may have been hysterical; it may have proceeded from that peculiar method of self-criticism which in cultivated people takes the shape of ridicule. It is one of the mental phenomena which escape the analysis of the philosophers, for the reason, in all probability, that the philosophers do not trouble themselves to investigate matters that never attract their attention. It is impossible, therefore, to say whether the schoolmistress was really amused or whether her laughter was the result of that inner conflict between trouble on the one hand and self-ridicule on the other, a conflict that is experienced by the best of us, I fancy, more than once in a lifetime. Howbeit,

her hilarity was short-lived. Recovering herself, she gazed once more into the mirror and raised her forefinger warningly to the image she saw there. It appeared that the image had also grown grave and suddenly prudent, for its forefinger was also raised warningly.

"If I were as old as you," said Miss Underwood to the reflection of herself, "I wouldn't make a fool of myself. Here you are getting along in years, and yet you can't speak to Somebody—no, and you can't pass Somebody on the street without blushing until your face is afire. And people call you a discreet woman! What are you to Somebody, and what is Somebody to you? If I were you, I would behave myself. That is the least you can do. Do you understand? Behave yourself. That is my advice."

And then, strange to relate, Miss Underwood changed her tactics. Instead of laughing, she flung herself in a chair, covered her face with her hands, and cried as though her heart would break. A little child she had frequently made much of strayed into the room, looked wonderingly a moment at the woman in tears, and then spoke in baby fashion: "N-o-w! Somebody done w'ip my Taty. Nasty, mean somebody. Menie w'ip um back adin, me will." Then after a pause: "Ef my Taty ty, me ty too," whereupon the little toddler set up a most resonant yell and refused to be comforted until her "Taty" took her to her bosom, and the two, the woman and the little child, mingled their tears together.

Meanwhile Vanderlyn, leaving the fair Katherine at the hotel, walked toward the old church. He had not proceeded far before he heard some one calling him. Pausing and looking around, he saw Tiny Padgett sauntering toward him, swinging a rattan cane.

"Morning, Van!" exclaimed the young man heartily. "What's up? You look as grim as a North Carolina bull-bat."

"Exercise," said the other. "I have to stretch myself after being cramped up in bed all night. What pulls you out so early?"

Padgett laughed. "Business, as well as inclination," he answered. "I am not up as early as you might suppose. I haven't been to bed."

"What have you been doing?"

"O, playing the old Harry. Knocking around among the boys, drinking, carousing, 'rastling with the world, the flesh, and the devil, and getting the worst of it." There was a touch of sadness rather than of recklessness in the emphasis with which he went over the catalogue. "But, after all," he continued with a sigh, "I came out about even. We roped in that artist, the new fellow who has come here to take daguerreotypes."

"Roped him in?"

"Rather. He is a very nice man. He has a romantic name and a very romantic appearance. He is an exceedingly nice man. I reckon if you were to go a ten days' journey you wouldn't find a nicer man. And smart—you wouldn't hardly believe how smart he is unless he told you himself." Vanderlyn had become accustomed to the irony which Padgett used, with as much effect against his own weaknesses as against those of other people, and remained silent. "You think I am joking," Padgett continued after a little pause, "but I am not. O no! How could I joke about a man named Claude Wellington? And even if he was not named Wellington, he is from New York, which amounts to the same thing. He hadn't been in town twenty-four hours before he found his way to Floyd's, and then he wanted to tackle somebody at poker. He told us all about how he took the money of the New York and Philadelphia chaps, and then he said if we didn't know the game he would teach us. I took a few lessons under him, and it just cost him three hundred and seventy-five dollars."

"That is considerable," was Vanderlyn's curt comment.

"Yes," said Tiny, "I not only got his money, but all his history. He is a mad wag. He and Miss Kate Underwood were children together and grew up together. I rather think he is inclined to be sweet on her still."

"The d—d scoundrel!" exclaimed Vanderlyn passionately. "Did he talk about her in a barroom?"

"He did but sing her praises, my lord," said the other in a tragic tone, "and his voice was most enchanting. Ah! Vanderlyn," he continued, growing serious, "you will have to crawl into my boat, after all. If women are all alike—

and they are when it comes to that—you will have to secure passage with me. It is better than floundering about in the deep sea. You would make a famous vagabond. If I had your height and breadth, I should become famous in ten counties. To be a successful loafer requires as many special gifts as those which go to make an orator. But, above all, one must have the pressure. Pressure is what catches the crowd; it is everything."

Vanderlyn strode onward without a word, and Padgett walked by his side. Presently the two plunged into the woods that skirted the western portion of the town and quickly lost themselves in the cool green hollows that nature had built. They had left the world behind them. Here the birds sang, and the breezes blew. The pines gave their subtle aroma to the winds, that seemed to breathe and faint and breathe again, lapping the sterile red hills that bordered the forest and pouring its incense through all the myriad channels of the air.

"You see," said Padgett with the air and authority of one who was about to elucidate a difficult problem, "you see, women are mighty curious. They are the proud possessors of what old Uncle Ben calls mulishness. They know they are mulish, and they appear to be glad of it. I never saw but one woman in my life that was true to her impulses, and she," he continued with a sigh, "had no opportunity of observing the hypocrisy that both men and women have to meet and match, if they can. A fellow like me, who has nothing to lose and nothing to gain by flattering any of them, can afford to sit off and study them as people study a puzzle. It is a fine employment. The only objection is that it gives youth a sort of premature experience; but, after all, it is a sort of experience that precept can never hope to compass."

"Did you say his name was Wellington?" inquired Vanderlyn. It was plain that he had not heard the fine oral essay which Padgett had been delivering.

"I don't remember what you are talking about," answered Tiny, seized by a spirit of deviltry.

"This man Wellington. Who did you say he was?"

"O, you are speaking of the duke. Yes, I understand.

Well, of course you know all about him. He had enough of Waterloo to give Napoleon a slice. There are more Napoleons than Wellingtons. At any rate, the most of us have a little private Waterloo of our own. But it is a great pity that Wellington had to depend on Blucher. I am going to name my eldest grandchild Blucher."

"He loved her in her youth," said Vanderlyn contemplatively. "He must be a happy man."

"To be sure," said Padgett, laughing in spite of himself. "He loved her passing well—better than Napoleon loved Josephine. But look here, old man. Don't you think you're running history a little heavy?"

"I think I hear some one walking," said Vanderlyn.

"Well, you ought to be certain before you prefer charges. Many a mouse has got credit for what the moths have done."

"Don't you hear somebody walking?" asked the other.

"I saw some one walking," replied Padgett, "and to that extent mine eyes confirm mine ears."

"The liquor you drank last night seems to last," said Vanderlyn dryly.

"It won't last until Christmas," responded the other, who seemed to have been seized by the imp of the perverse. "But it will outlast a man's affections and a woman's memory. You mustn't judge liquor by its results. You must— But where the devil did that fellow go?"

"Which fellow?"

"Why, the party who was coming down the blind path there."

Vanderlyn was reclining against a tall pine and had not taken the trouble to turn his head in the direction of the noise he had heard. Before either one of them had an opportunity to grow curious over the disappearance of the man Padgett had seen, the sharp crack of a rifle was heard, and the ball tore through the bark within half an inch of Vanderlyn's head. For a moment neither of the two comprehended what had happened; but the next instant Padgett was upon his feet, running like a deer in the direction of a little ring of blue smoke curling lazily upward from a clump of bushes about fifty yards away. Whether the promptness of Padgett took the would-be assassin by surprise or wheth-

er he was too sure of his aim to make any attempt to escape, it is impossible to say; but when Vanderlyn reached the spot he found Tiny engaged in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle with—Jim Ashfield.

"This is my meat, Padgett," he said, laying his powerful hand upon Ashfield. "This is the man I'm a-hunting for. Providence brought him here, and Providence aimed that rifle. Stand up, Mr. Ashfield, and give an account of yourself. You ain't improved much since we traveled together fourteen years ago."

"O, I know you!" exclaimed Ashfield in a shrill, passionate voice. I know you, and you needn't think I don't. I know'd you, durn you, that night at Floyd's bar, an' I ought to 'a' settled wi' you then. But it's all in a lifetime. We'll git even."

"We are already even," said Vanderlyn. "You have saved me the trouble of hunting all over creation for you."

"In other words," said Padgett, arranging his somewhat disordered clothes, "he can count on your sympathy and support."

"That's the way I look at it," replied Vanderlyn. "You are not a very good marksman, Ashfield," he continued, laughing.

"I would 'a' bin," said the latter, "ef 'twuzzent fer that d—d partner er your'n a-bobbin' his empty head in the way."

"Why, sir," exclaimed Padgett, "your politeness is overpowering. Your consideration is extraordinary. I shall treasure your remarkable forbearance in my memory. What can I do to repay you?"

"You can fix up that, Padgett, after we get to town. Mr. Ashfield will accompany us."

"I shall take pleasure, Mr. Ashfield," said Padgett lightly, "in aiding to escort you. The procession will please form. Are you ready, Mr. Ashfield?"

"As ready as I'll ever be," replied the other sullenly.

## XXII

While Miss Jane Perryman was engaged in the arduous duties of picking a chicken for dinner she was astonished by the sudden appearance of Mrs. Dusenberry. Miss Jane, alluding to this visit long afterwards, said she was "afeard

the 'oman, seein' that a chicken wuz to be put in the pot, 'ud stay all day," but it is more than probable that this was an afterthought. Mrs. Dusenberry had chickens of her own, even if they were not of the "yaller-legged" variety. She had seen the procession, which had been so unceremoniously formed into line in the woods by Padgett, pass in front of her house, and she hastened to convey the intelligence to some one who could share and sympathize with her bewilderment. She was unceremonious.

"Howdy, Jane. How's Nora? They've got 'im. I seed 'im."

"Well, in the name er gracious! What makes you so frustrated? Who've they got?" inquired Miss Jane, looking coolly at her visitor.

"They've got Jim Ashfield; that's who they've got, an' they've got him bad."

"What are they foolin' 'long er that miserable wretch fer, I'd like ter know?"

"It's more'n I kin tell, Jane; but they've got 'im. I seed 'em pass my house not more'n two minnits ago. That man Vanderlyn had a rifle, and Tiny Padgett had a cornstalk, makin' believe it wuz a gun. It's my 'pinion the man had been drinkin'."

"Which man?" asked Miss Jane severely.

"Why, that Tiny Padgett. You oughter 'a' seed 'im. He was a-gyratin' roun' an' flourishin' his cornstalk like he wuz the boss of the whole camp meetin'. It's a lastin' pity that some people don't have no sense."

"What's Jim Ashfield done now?" inquired Miss Jane.

"Lord love you, I don't know!" replied Mrs. Dusenberry. "But he wuz a-marchin' on before, an' this man Vanderlyn was a-follerin' along, an' Tiny Padgett wuz a-caperin' roun', fust makin' b'lieve his cornstalk wuz a gun an' then ridin' it like it wuz a hoss."

"Did they have 'im tied?"

"It wuzzent nothin' but a cornstalk hoss, Jane."

Miss Jane looked scornful. "Did I ax you 'bout the 'bom-inable cornstalk? What in the name er gracious you want ter mix folks up with cornstalks for?"

"Well, 'tain't me, Jane. It's that Padgett. What's he wantin' go an' be totin' a cornstalk like a gun an' then the

next minnit be a-straddlin' it like a hoss? What's a man wanten be makin' a specktikle er hisself for? That's what I wanten know. They took Jim Ashfield right to'rds the jail."

"What are they takin' him to jail for?"

"That's what I wanten know, Jane."

"Well, jails ain't a bad place these days," said Miss Jane sententiously. "Somebody's always a-wantin' ter git into 'em, an' I know some folks's families that 'ud be better off ef they's all git put in."

"That's what I say," remarked Mrs. Dusenberry, anxious to propitiate the frowning Miss Perryman; "an' it's what I've said all the time. Ef thar wuz more jails, folks 'ud git 'long a sight better."

"Ef we had better men," said Miss Jane, giving epigrammatic emphasis to her words, "we wouldn't have no jails an' no lawyers an' no jedges. It's got so now there's five lawyers to every piece er rascality an' a jedge to every lawyer."

In the meantime Jim Ashfield was really marching to the jail. His captors were good-humored, Padgett even hilariously so; but both were obdurate, and the would-be assassin knew that it would be idle to resist. Therefore he made the best of it and appeared to be as good-humored as the others. When Padgett pranced out in front of him astride of a cornstalk, as children ride a broomstick, and apparently making a great effort to prevent his impoverished horse from running away then and there, Ashfield laughed and said: "You oughter let out your surcingle, Cap., an' take up your sterrups a hole er two. Ef that hoss er your'n should happen to shy at a hog in the fence, you'd be left in the dirt."

"Why, Jimmy," Padgett responded, "you can't expect me to dismount right here. It wouldn't look altogether fashionable. This horse only needs exercise to make him as gentle as a lamb."

"Whatter you gwineter put me in jail fer, anyhow, gents?" inquired Ashfield after awhile as they trudged on toward the gloomy building that stood in the edge of the village—a warning, it seemed, to all who came within sight.



Vanderlyn was silent; but Padgett, whose loquacity appeared to be still experiencing the effects of the spree of the night before, answered for him.

"It's because you shot at a squirrel and missed him. An old sport like you ought to know. It's an offense against good morals to deliberately aim at a squirrel and miss him. It's contrary to the law. Whoa, Wildcat!"—this to the cornstalk.

Nearing the tavern, Padgett became more demure. He flung his cornstalk away and walked by Vanderlyn's side, assuming a dignity that was in laughable contrast with his wild pranks of a few moments before. A lady and a gentlemen were standing upon the piazza.

"Now, by the good King Harry!" exclaimed Padgett. "This is an early beginning. Behold, my Lord Vanderlyn, the culmination of a beautiful romance! That is the noble Wellington. He seeketh out the fair Katherine and wooeth her. But, by Jove"—in a tone of astonishment—"don't he stand the racket, though? He looks as fresh as a lily pad."

And he did look fresh, this Mr. Wellington, as he stood leaning against one of the wooden columns talking earnestly to the schoolmistress. He was a handsome man, too, Vanderlyn thought—lithe, graceful, straight as an arrow, self-poised, and with an air of languid arrogance that well became his pale, intellectual features and his fine figure.

"When a blind owl gets any drunker than he was last night," pursued Padgett, "and gets over it with more dispatch, I'll pay for the owl, that's all."

"I would rather have the owl than the man," said Vanderlyn contemptuously.

"That's because you are not a woman," replied Padgett, sarcastically. "A woman would swap the owl for that nice man twenty times a day and give a bracelet to boot."

"Yes," said Vanderlyn, "I suppose so. But what is that to you or to me?"

At this moment they were nearly opposite the schoolmistress and the fascinating Wellington. Padgett raised his hat, smiled, and bowed. Vanderlyn strode onward, turning his head neither to the right nor to the left; and in a few moments the "procession" had turned a corner and was out of sight, leaving the fascinating Mr. Wellington and the fair

Katherine Underwood standing together upon the long piazza.

"O, I'm so glad!" exclaimed the schoolmistress, who had turned pale and then red.

"Glad of what, Katie?" asked Mr. Wellington, tapping his boots lightly with the little cane he held in his hands.

"Why, that they have caught that man. He is a terrible desperado."

"Was it that tall fellow?"

"Why, how absurd!" exclaimed the schoolmistress warmly. "He is the best and noblest man I ever knew."

"Well, I'm a stranger, Katie. I am not supposed to know all your noblest men on sight. But, upon my word, if some one had paraded the three before me, I should unhesitatingly have pointed out the big man as the heavy villain. He is a strapper. A friend of yours, I presume."

"No," said the schoolmistress cautiously; "an acquaintance. In Rockville we have very few friends, but a wide circle of acquaintances."

"I understand. Provincial altogether. Decidedly pastoral. I can conceive of nothing more charming."

The man was gradually losing ground without knowing it. In the old days this man standing before her with so much self-confidence had been the ideal hero of Kate Underwood's life; and perhaps it was this fact, well known to him, that made his later wooing somewhat arrogant in its effect, if not in its intent. In her girlish dreams this man Wellington had rescued her from old castles full of trapdoors and secret chambers and had slain the fiery dragons that beset her path. But it was all so different now. It was pleasant enough to remember; but somehow between her and the love of her youth a full, stalwart, manly figure interposed itself, a figure capable of slaying real dragons and of storming real castles, if need be, not only for the woman he loved, but for any one in distress. And then, somehow or other, she found herself contrasting the modest, manly figure whose very homeliness seemed suggestive of all that was pathetic and tender with the self-sufficient, conceited man who came to claim from the woman what he had received from the girl. The contrast was not a favor-

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able one to Wellington, and this fact would have made itself apparent if he had been less sure of his ground.

"Yes," she said, responding somewhat coldly to his bantering words; "it is quite charming here, as you will find, if you choose to put the place and its people to the test."

"God forbid!" he exclaimed fervently, probably remembering the result of the night before.

"We are contented here, at least," said the schoolmistress, pretending not to heed his interruption. "We are contented, and that is something."

"Contented, Katie?"

"Yes," she replied, "contented; more than contented—happy."

"And yet you would like to leave here; you would like to return to the old place. You remember how we used to hunt the robins' nests in the orchard?"

"Ah, yes! That was ever so long ago. We hunted for them, and we found them, and that was the end of the robins' nests, so far as we are concerned."

"But what of the robins, Katie?" The man was stirred. After a manner he was sincere. He had traveled many a mile to find this woman; and he was determined, if possible, to reestablish the dreams of his youth. "But what of the robins?" he repeated, seeing that she was gazing vaguely away past and beyond him, but not seeing the sturdy figure that seemed to be standing near, imploring her by its very silence.

"O, the robins!" she exclaimed, still watching the vision. "Would we know them if we saw them again? Would you know them? Would they know us?"

"But maybe the nests are still there, Katie." His arrogance seemed all at once to desert him. She saw it and pitied him.

"And if they are," she replied, speaking in a gentle tone, a tone that riled him utterly, "the robins have deserted them. The past is like the robins' nests," she continued, still pitying this lover of her youth. "It is a memory, and that is all. We may as well attempt to call back the young birds that fed so confidently from our hands as to call back the past."

"I have come a long journey, Katie," he said after a little pause, "and you know what I have come for. I have looked forward to this day for many a weary year." He was thoroughly in earnest now, but he seemed to anticipate what the result would be, and yet it seemed so impossible.

"Yes," she said, "I know what you have come for. I know all that you would say. I am sorry, indeed."

"But, Katie, consider what I have lived for all these years," he said impetuously.

"I do," she replied gently. "I consider it all; and if I could bring back the past, I would, but I cannot."

"And this is how women are faithful," he exclaimed bitterly.

"I do not know. To be true to you, I should tell you the truth. I could not be to you now what I thought I was in the old days. It is a pleasant memory to me, and that is all."

"Very well," he said. "I admire your frankness. I am going North. What shall I say to your friends?"

"Say to them that you found me contented with my lot. Is it good-by?" she asked as he held out his delicate white hand.

"Unless you will it otherwise," his face white and drawn.

"Good-by, then," she said firmly, and Mr. Wellington went his way.

### XXIII

Wellington went his way. He was not wholly a bad man. He loved the woman not as well as he loved his toddy, but nearly as well. His experience had been a varied one. He had wrestled and fought with Satan in all his forms until it was of little importance to either which came off conqueror. But, somehow or other, this woman lived in his memory and disturbed his dreams. She was associated in his recollection with his mother, a prime old New England lady, who was always ready to couple a warning with a benediction, whose life was full of fervor and whose death was as peaceful as the setting of the sun. He had made so sure of his future! He had been careless in his actions, but not in his anticipations. He had bought the old Underwood house in Sunbury, not because it was an inviting structure or desirable as a homestead, but because he thought Kate

would like it. It was there he had first seen her. It was there she had grown into womanhood, while he journeyed among the pioneers of the West and learned to fleece them of their small savings in a genteel way. It was there he fondly dreamed she would be glad to spend the remainder of her days. Perhaps if he had told her all, if he had taken the trouble to go over his struggles, if he had been inclined to speak to her of the old homestead, the result might have been different; and yet who knows? A woman's will is wilder than the wind's will. A vane guides you as to the wind, but who has been insane enough to fix a gauge for a woman's will? To Kate Underwood the romance of her youth had lost its piquancy. The assurance of her old-time lover had lost its flavor. If he had been a trifle less confident, if he had wooed as one who had little hope, if he had concealed his arrogance beneath a veil of mock despair, as most sensible men do, perhaps he might have been successful. At least he might have created an impression; at the very least he might have diverted her attention temporarily from the man who had begun to appear to her in dreams and who seemed to be the one hero of her wildest romance. But Wellington failed utterly. He undertook to gauge the woman by the girl he had known in the olden time; and when he walked away, vanquished and disappointed, he knew that he had failed, but he did not know the reason. But he accepted the result; and when he stepped from the piazza and wandered languidly up the street, whirling his rattan cane in the air, he passed from Kate Underwood's sight forever. It was well for him that he did; it was well for her. She thought of him no more. Years afterwards, when little children played at her feet and called her mother, she remembered almost with a shudder how nearly she had come to surrendering her life to the keeping of this most inconstant man; and, knowing his after history, familiar with his stormy career, she clasped her babes to her breast and thanked heaven that she had not followed him into the wilderness, and yet sometimes she dreamed that she might have led him to a nobler and higher destiny. Who can tell? Who knows what possibilities were wrapped up in this man's soul? Who can say that the keen edge of disappointment did not wound him utterly? Fate is inex-

orable. Her grim figure oftenest stands between hope and consummation, and that which we call chance or accident is always the result of the inevitable. We are but dreamers at best. That which seems the most substantial may be dispelled by the breath of dawn, while that which appears to be immaterial may endure forever. He who asks for the time of day but desires to chronicle his own decay; and the only consolation of the best of us is that the oblivion which lies upon the outskirts of time and turmoil affords an escape from disappointment, contumacy, and even fate itself. The future holds no miracles for the philosopher, and the tame tragedies of life possess no pathos. But who among us will assume the patient garb of philosophy or claim contentment as our own? Who shall know sin from wisdom? In the midst of mortality we see but dimly at best, and it is too early to condemn the schoolboy who a thousand years from now shall stone the monuments that we have erected to perpetuate our pride, our pomp, or our affection.

Wellington went his way, not slowly as one in sorrow, but jauntily as one who goes to a festival. He went his way and knew not, in losing, how near he came to winning. Nor did the woman know how deep a wound she had inflicted. The phantom we call Fate strode in between the twain, and they passed on—she to fulfill her destiny, and he to fulfill his; she to fortune and to happiness, and he to the misfortunes that so continually beset us all.

Those of the inhabitants of Rockville who trouble themselves to read this hasty chronicle will remember Wellington as a desperate gambler and drunkard, careless of his own future, but generous to the last degree, a man whose charities were limited only by the scantiness of his purse.

In the meantime Mrs. Dusenberry had aroused the neighborhood. From Miss Perryman's she proceeded to Mrs. Bagley's; and then the two, intent on being the first to learn gloomy tidings, marched in solemn procession to Mrs. Padgett's and recounted in the most profound manner the eccentricities of Tiny in connection with the startling fact about Jim Ashfield.

"An' ef I do say it myself," remarked Mrs. Dusenberry, complacently smoothing out the various imaginary folds in her gingham apron, "that Tiny acted scandalous. He had

a cornstalk, an' he rid it roun' like as ef 'twas a reg'lar built hoss, an' sech another kickin' up you never seen. It was scandalous, ef I do say it myself."

Mrs. Padgett was too anxious to hear the particulars to come to the rescue of Tiny. Besides, she looked upon Mrs. Dusenberry almost as one of the family, and her criticisms were generally of far less importance than her information; for Mrs. Padgett, though possessing a native pride peculiarly her own and a native temper of absurd proportions, was much readier to brook an insult than to miss an item of gossip. Confine the female mind to an area of half a mile (it cannot be conveniently confined in a less), and it runs to gossip as naturally as the mocking birds sing, even when they are pent up in a cage; not that the imprisoned birds sing naturally, but it is their misfortune that they will attempt to sing and thus give thoughtless people an excuse for caging them.

Mrs. Padgett smoothed her irritation as best she might, making a martyr of herself in the attempt, and then the women fell to gossiping as pleasantly and as vivaciously as though they were the sincerest friends and did not despise each other most heartily. They conversed the matter thoroughly, and they were still canvassing it when Tiny strode into the house.

"Now we'll know," said Mrs. Dusenberry complacently, untying her bonnet and flinging it upon a lounge as if preparing for a siege.

Mrs. Padgett looked neither elated nor confident. She had good reason to fear that Tiny would not add to their scant stock of information. She had reason to know something of his contempt for the small but persistent curiosity of women. She had long ago become familiar with, but not accustomed to, his astonishing waywardness, and she was not sanguine that he would be inclined to respond readily to the inquiries in store for him. She knew by his movements, however, that he was in good humor. He came in singing and passed through the hall to the back porch, where the ladies presently heard him yelling at Aunt Patsy, the cook.

"Come out of there, you old reprobate, and get me something to eat!" he bawled. "Do you think a man's going to

starve just because you like to sit and feel the flies crawling on you?"

Aunt Patsy, who fairly worshiped her young master, principally because he was one of the ideal vagabonds of the era, made a great pretense of perpetual gruffness in her dealings with him.

"How you reckon I gwineter git dinner ef I gotter be eternally gittin' breakfus' two times in de blessid mornin'? Look like dat some folks is allers a-huntin' roun' seein' ef dey can't flustrate somebody. Ef I git you enny breakfus' now, you better count it dinner, 'cause I ain't gwineter be sailin' roun' an' gittin' yo' dinner after supper, I kin tell you dat now."

"No, you old villain. You sit here and stuff yourself day in and day out, and you think nobody else wants to eat. I want you to hurry up with that banquet."

"Whar dat pipe w'at you promise mammy?" This in a conciliating tone. "I 'lay you didn't fetch it, an' now here you come a-hollerin' an' a-bawlin' 'bout victuals w'at you oughter dun et yistiddy."

The querulous old darky knew he had the pipe; and so she didn't wait for a reply, but went bustling around getting together the little delicacies she had saved for her favorite.

Meanwhile Tiny, going into the sitting room, was attacked by the ladies, who were lying in wait for him. He was saluted with a chorus of questions about Jim Ashfield. Was he in jail? Really and truly in jail? What for? What had he done? Who put him in there? Was he chained? Was it very dark in the jail? Did he try to escape?

"Well, I can't tell you much, ladies," said young Padgett in reply to the chorus. "But I'll say this: It is a very mysterious case. The man will have trouble before he is through with it. It looks to me like a very plain affair."

The ladies were excited. Didn't they say so? Hadn't they told each other over and over again that there was something wrong about the man? They didn't know what, but they were sure it was something. Yes, indeed! He looked like a murderer. Hadn't they noticed the cut of his eyes? and didn't they remark the reckless way he had of walking? To be sure, they had, not once, but frequently. It was a mercy that with such a man roaming around that



way every woman and child in the country hadn't been killed every night in the week. Thus the chorus went on, until finally Padgett remarked gravely: "I am one of the lawyers, ladies, and some of you may have to be summoned as witnesses." Whereupon each woman became suddenly ignorant. Mrs. Dusenberry hardly knew the man by sight, and Mrs. Bagley vowed that if John Bell hadn't told her who Ashfield was she would have failed to recognize him.

## XXIV

The incarceration of Jim Ashfield created considerable excitement in Rockville. In fact, it was a sensation, the first that had been vouchsafed to the village since he had been arrested and jailed several years before, so that some of the older citizens were moved to remark that it seemed as if Providence had had some hand in preserving the man for the purpose of providing exciting interludes in the dead calm of peace and prosperity which had brooded over the little town.

Both Miss Jane and Nora endeavored to get the particulars of the affair from William Wornum, but he was decidedly reticent upon the subject. They knew he had long, confidential talks with Vanderlyn, but somehow he did not seem inclined to be communicative. Nora, however, was persistent, and she never lost an opportunity to refer to the subject.

"I think it is hard," she said one afternoon as they sat together in the porch, "that he should be put in jail."

"Yes," replied the schoolmaster, "it is hard."

"I mean it is cruel."

"Yes; but in order to be just it is necessary that we should be both hard and cruel."

"I do not think it just," she said.

"No, because you cannot understand that cruelty should accompany justice. It may be that this is one of the necessities inherited from the era of barbarism, but it is a necessity, nevertheless."

"But he has a sister," she persisted.

"It is her misfortune that she has such a brother," the schoolmaster replied. "It is one of the accidents of fate that

she must make the best of it. If Ashfield's bullet had hit its mark, we should have pitied Jack; but how would that have consoled him? Would our pity repair his loss? Does pity justify murder?"

"You put it too harshly," she said gently. "I was only thinking of the loneliness of the poor woman whose brother is in jail. The thought of her grief confuses me."

"I only put it fairly," he made reply. "The fact that this woman's brother is in jail is her misfortune. We all have our misfortunes, and we all have to make the best of them. Here was a deliberate attempt at murder, according to all accounts."

"What motive could the man have had for committing murder?"

"We will endeavor to establish the motive during the trial. We hope to prove that, at the very least, he had motive enough to make the attempt."

"But the grief of his sister must be very bitter, whether he be guilty or not," Nora said, clinging to the womanly argument which had first suggested itself.

"If he be guilty," responded the schoolmaster, "he should be punished, whether his sister's grief be bitter or not. It may be that my sympathy for the sister is not as keen as yours; but, nevertheless, I sympathize with her. I am told that she is devoted to this vagabond brother of hers. More's the pity. It is not the first time he has brought grief upon her, but I dare say it will be the last. There are other people," he also continued, thinking of his own troubles, "who need your sympathy."

"Need my sympathy?" she asked, her heightened color failing to verify the incredulity of her tone. "Who are they, pray?"

"Various people," he replied coolly; "various people whom you do not take into account. It is true they are insignificant people; but they have their troubles and their griefs, nevertheless."

"We can pity only those whose sorrows we know of," she said gently.

"We are continually learning," he replied, laughing a little harshly. "I had thought that sympathy embraced all the sorrows we could conceive of. But this is a practical age;

and pity, for want of something better to do, has become a census taker."

"Now you are laughing at me," said Nora, pouting pettishly.

"No," said he; "I am only reasoning with you. I am only insisting that if sympathy is a missionary and sorrow a heathen, it is well not to follow the old example of searching them out in foreign lands. The pagans are at our very doors."

"You make too severe an application of your morals," she replied. "I was speaking of this man's sister. We can sympathize only with those whose sorrows and whose misfortunes we know. Otherwise our sympathy becomes sentimental and purposeless. I know of no one who needs to be pitied more than this poor woman."

"And yet there are others," said the schoolmaster.

"I do not know them," said the blind girl gently. "They keep their troubles to themselves. They have little need of the sympathy of one like me."

"You cannot tell. None of us can tell. It is best we should not know. Sympathy sown broadcast over the land is the best, after all. It is sure to reach its mark."

This was one of the many attempts of Nora to find out the probable motive that induced Jim Ashfield to attempt to burn Vanderlyn's shop and afterwards to make an effort to assassinate him. All sorts of rumors were afloat in the town and in the country. One was to the effect that Vanderlyn had made an attempt to poison Ashfield's sister while she was sick. Another was that Tiny Padgett had exasperated the man by laughing at him until he was obliged to shoot him in self-defense. Hundreds of such rumors were abroad. Mrs. Dusenberry had her theory, Mrs. Bagley hers, and Miss Jane hers. It is needless to say that they were all wide of the mark, but that made little difference. They were as stoutly held to as though they had been verified over and over again, and some of them became traditions long after the true facts were known to every man, woman, and child within fifty miles of Rockville—insomuch so that it is doubtful if those who ought to be well acquainted with the circumstances will not look upon this hasty chronicle as an exaggeration of fiction.

But the gossips had their way, and the law had its way. The summer waned, and autumn took her place. September came in with a touch of winter, and the time for the meeting of the Superior Court came rapidly on. It was an eventful period to those who have figured in this unpretentious sketch. It was the culmination of the history which I have endeavored to write.

## XXV

The languor of September fell upon the village of Rockville quietly and serenely. The amber sunsets burned the pleasant days to ashes in the west, and the rosy morning fanned them to flames in the east. As the time for holding court approached, the gossips grew more and more confidential, and the substantial men of the town communed together with an air of mingled sadness and reproach, as who should say: "This is nothing to us. We have done the best we could. This man Ashfield is to be tried, but that is none of our affair." The high sheriff of the county, Colonel John B. Pitts, became more dignified and less communicative. The Colonel was the center of attraction; for, in the minds of the people, he wielded a great deal more power and was, therefore, more powerful than the fat, good-natured judge who presided upon the bench and who, while the lawyers were lashing themselves and the jury into a passion with their fiery eloquence, frequently fanned himself to sleep and dreamed strange dreams of men who waylaid strangers in the wilderness and devoured them bodily without compunction. Mr. Bagley was very much interested in all this and had made frequent attempts to approach Colonel Pitts on the subject, but the Colonel was inexorable.

"It's no use, boys," he would say on such occasions. "The law's gotter take her course. What the law says, that's what I say, and I don't say no more. When she clamps down on a man, he's got for to lay thar tell she let's up. That's the law."

And it was the law in those days. Lately the law has given way to the freaks of the lawyers. But when Jim Ashfield lay in jail in Rockville the lawyers could do nothing for him. Indeed, they didn't try. In the first place, public sentiment was against him; and, in the second place, he was

unable to secure a lawyer and was altogether without counsel until Emory Reed volunteered to defend him. I am of the opinion that young Reed was prompted to do this by the sympathy which Nora Perryman was in the habit of expressing. Somehow she seemed to feel unutterable pity for the sister of the wretched man, and this led her to recur to his case again and again.

A change had also come over Tiny Padgett. He forsook his wild companions; and if he drank at all, he did not drink to excess. It was true, as he had said, that he had been engaged as the prosecuting attorney for the prosecution, and he seemed to be devoting his whole attention to the case. He was cool, collected, and industrious. He had long walks and talks with Vanderlyn, and he had made up his mind to pursue a line that would astonish the prosecution and the defense, as well as the judge and jurors. He was not as reticent as Sheriff Pitts, for he really had something to conceal, while the sheriff had nothing; but he was less communicative. He had devoted himself entirely to the case, so much so that the State solicitor was content to occupy a position in the background.

Kate Underwood was as inquisitive as the rest, but she had little opportunity to see Vanderlyn, who seemed to avoid her; and as Miss Jane knew as little about the matter as any one else, her curiosity was not at all satisfied.

In the meantime the first day of court week drew rapidly nigh, and finally it dawned. The people began to come in from the country early in the morning, all eager to be present at what promised to be the most sensational trial Rockville had ever witnessed. Lawyers came from a distance, and the inhabitants of the village, each and every one, got ready to swell the crowd of spectators. Judge Vardeman was early in his seat, and various smaller cases were disposed of or postponed. Finally the clerk of the court, a pale little man, read from the docket: "The State *versus* James Ashfield—assault with intent to murder." There was a hush in the courthouse. Ashfield sat in the prisoner's bar, eying the crowd sullenly and wickedly, while Emory Reed, his counsel, talked earnestly to him. William Wornum was busily engaged in turning over the leaves of a ponderous volume in calf, while the solicitor was nervously thumbing

a number of papers bound with a piece of red tape. All seemed to be engaged except Tiny Padgett, who sat tilted back in his chair, with his hands clasped behind his head, watching the clouds as they passed in panoramic procession before the windows. A jury was quickly impaneled from the large number of citizens present. But just as the case was about to go in Padgett arose, passed his fingers carelessly through his hair, and said: "May it please your honor, I move that the indictment be quashed and that we proceed to try the next case."

There was some little sensation in the court room, and the judge fanned himself somewhat petulantly as he asked: "What is the next case, Mr. Clerk?"

"The State *versus* James Ashfield—child-stealing."

The sensation deepened. Perhaps the only ones who were not astonished were the prisoner, Padgett, and the pale clerk.

"May it please the court," said Emory Reed, "this is a new turn of affairs to us. We are not prepared"—

"Your honor," said Padgett, rising quickly to his feet, "they are as well prepared as they will ever be. They have all their witnesses here. They have had due notice."

Emory Reed consulted for some time with his client; but the consultation did not seem to be satisfactory, for he finally arose with a frown upon his handsome face and said: "We are ready, your honor."

And then the trial began. The opening speeches of the counsel were exceedingly tame, at least to the spectators. The prosecution maintained that the prisoner, some years before, had stolen the child of Judge Walthall and should suffer the penalty of the law therefor; while the defense held that, having restored the child, he was, in effect, guiltless.

"If you are through, gentlemen," said Judge Vardeman when the counsel for the defense had taken his seat, "we are ready to hear testimony."

"Mr. Sheriff," said Tiny Padgett, "call Mr. Daniel Vanderyn." But it was needless to call him. He was present, and when he heard his name he pressed forward.

"Did I understand you to say you wanted me?" he asked, glancing first at the Judge and then at Padgett.

"Yes, Mr. Vanderlyn," said the latter, waving his hand coldly toward the witness stand. "I desire to ask you a few questions."

Vanderlyn was evidently taken by surprise. He was cool and imperturbable, but it was plain that he did not understand the tactics of Padgett. He glanced quizzically at the young lawyer; but the latter was still looking languidly at the procession of clouds that passed before the window, some white and silvery, some fringed with gold, and some black and threatening. Not once did he turn his eyes from the window. He seemed to know by intuition what was passing around him; and when all was ready he rose to his feet and, with one hand upon the back of his chair, the other toying with a small ball of paper, and his face still turned toward the vague perspective that stretched away from the window, he proceeded to examine the witness. His method of examination was new to the experience of the Rockville court; and the older lawyers, watching him closely, marveled at his indescribable coolness. People who had known him all their lives seemed to forget that they had ever seen him. He appeared before them for once completely sober. There was no trace of dissipation upon his face. The schoolmistress, sitting where she could see him in profile, was reminded of the pictures of Raphael, a resemblance that was intensified by the remarkably sad expression which seemed to light up his features. One young woman—Victoria Sparks, I think her name was—said long afterwards that he looked that day like a poet. Nora Perryman, sitting with her hands clasped upon her sister's arm, heard his voice and recognized with a thrill that some great change had come over him. All his old-time humor seemed to have fled. Where was the boisterous, reckless wag that even the negroes familiarly alluded to as Tiny Padgett? The schoolmaster, who was a great student of character, found himself mystified and puzzled beyond measure at the great change that had come over the young man. And the Judge, who had only known Padgett as a reckless young vagabond, who often made trouble in the court room by turning the most serious episodes into ridicule, stopped fanning himself to regard with astonishment the pale, pathetic face. Few of the people who saw him standing there ever forgot his ap-

pearance, for few of them ever saw him again. He stood for a moment, until the noise in the court room had entirely subsided—until, indeed, the silence seemed to be breathless. Then, half turning to Vanderlyn, but still looking out through the window, he began the examination.

"What is your name?" His voice was firm, cold, and curt.

"I—that is"—

Padgett waved his hand imperiously.

"What is your occupation?" Vanderlyn drew a deep breath in relief.

"I am a gunmaker."

"You make guns and set yourself up as a target. Very well. Do you know that man?"

"Do you mean Jim Ashfield?"

"Yes."

"I have met him before."

"Do you remember when and where you met him?"

"Perfectly."

#### XXVI

Padgett repeated the question: "Do you remember when and where you met this man, this Jim Ashfield?"

"Perfectly well."

"Do you mind stating the particulars to the jury?"

"Not in the least. I met Ashfield at 'Cajy Cooper's, where his sister was lying at the point of death."

"How often did you meet him?"

"Once only."

"Did you know him?"

"May it please your honor," said Vanderlyn, appealing from the curtness of Padgett to the apparent benevolence of the Judge, but Padgett anticipated him.

"The court is not examining you, Mr. Vanderlyn. You must answer my question. Did you know this man Ashfield when you saw him at 'Cajy Cooper's?"

There was a pause. Vanderlyn looked at the Judge, who was fanning himself placidly, at Padgett, who was still watching the clouds float past the window, and at the crowd, which seemed to be eager to hear his answer.

"I thought I knew him," he finally answered.

"You were not sure?"



"No."

"Did you meet him afterwards?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"At Floyd's saloon."

"Did you know him then?"

"I did."

"By what sign did you recognize him?"

"By a scar upon his forehead."

All except Padgett turned their eyes upon Ashfield. Just above his brows there shone a livid scar, a scar that might have been taken for the trail of a fiery serpent.

"It would appear from this, Mr. Vanderlyn, that you knew this man even before you met him at 'Cajy Cooper's. Am I right?"

There was another pause. Vanderlyn's glance wandered from judge and jury and finally rested upon Kate Underwood. Something in the sadness of that fair face seemed to reassure him. Turning slowly, he glanced at Judge Walthall, who sat within the bar, and replied in a tone that rang through the court room: "You are right."

"You knew this man before you met him at Cooper's?"

"I did."

"Before you came to Rockville?"

"I did."

"Will you state to the court and to the jury the circumstances under which you met the prisoner?"

"Your honor, am I compelled to answer these questions?" asked Vanderlyn, turning to the Judge.

"The witness must answer all questions having a tendency to inculcate or exculpate the prisoner. We must get at all the facts bearing directly or indirectly upon this extraordinary case."

No one but Padgett and the schoolmaster knew why the complacent Judge alluded to the case as an extraordinary one.

"Where did you first meet the prisoner?" pursued Padgett, as though nothing had occurred.

"At Roach's Ferry," responded Vanderlyn.

"When?"

"In 1841."

"Will you please state to the court and the jury the circumstances?"

"I was peddling tobacco," said Vanderlyn. "I was driving a wagon. I reached this ferry about dusk. This man here was sitting upon the bank and asked me to give him a lift to the next town. I was a stranger in these parts, and I told"— [Omission in copy.]

"Why were you so quick to help this stranger along?"

"He seemed to be broken down. It was pure charity."

"Was there no other reason?" asked Padgett, turning for the first time and looking the witness straight in the face.

There was a momentary pause. Glancing around, Vanderlyn once more caught the clear eyes of Katherine Underwood resting upon him. That decided him. But even this pause gave Padgett an excuse for repeating his question.

"Was there no other reason?"

"There was."

"Well?" Padgett's voice was cold and informal, almost cruel.

"He had a little child with him," the other replied gently, but not so gently that in the breathless silence that reigned his voice did not go to the uttermost parts of the hall.

There was a little stir among the ladies, and then they all looked at each other in a deprecatory way. Miss Victoria Sparks stated afterwards in her strong vernacular that "Kate Underwood sat bolt upright, as white as a sheet." Tiny Padgett flipped his ball of paper through the window as though he had carried a point. Something of his old manner returned, and for the first time he turned and looked straight at the witness.

"Mr. Vanderlyn," he said, "will you give to the court and the jury the history of that child? Will you tell us what disposition was made of it?"

"I have no objection," said the witness. "But before I proceed I would be glad if you would read this," handing a slip of paper to the young lawyer. "I was told to give it to you."

Padgett received the slip and, apparently without looking at it, passed it to the schoolmaster with the remark: "This is to be filed with the other documents."

Whether it was filed or not, it was never known; but it was never produced. Indeed, William Wornum seemed shortly afterwards to grow tired of this trial; for he arose, beckoned to Jack, who sat among the spectators, and the two went out together. It was observed by the older lawyers who were present that the witness underwent a great change. He spoke without embarrassment and was more communicative.

"Shall I go on?" he asked presently.

"Certainly," said Padgett. "We desire the full history of the case."

"I was peddling tobacco," Vanderlyn began, "and I had occasion to cross the Oconee at Roach's Ferry. It was nearly dusk when I reached the landing, and the first thing that attracted my attention was a man sitting down by the side of the road with a child in his arms. The child was crying. While waiting for the ferryman I drew this man into a conversation, and I discovered that he was traveling in my direction. He asked me if I would give him a lift. I told him I thought I could. I was impressed by the crying of the child. It seemed to be exhausted. I took this man in my wagon, and we went on a long journey together. The man had no sooner climbed into the wagon than the child wanted to come to me, and I took it in my lap and carried it for miles and miles that way. It became an everyday business. The child never seemed satisfied with the other man, but was continually crying to come to me. One night we camped near the Alabama line. It was pretty cold, and we made a rousing fire. I had gone to sleep with the child in my arms, but I awoke about day the next morning and found the child gone. Pretty soon I heard a cry, and I just raised the wagon cover a little, and what do you think I saw?"

No one answered, and there was such silence in the court room that a pin might have been heard to drop.

"Well, gentlemen," continued Vanderlyn, raising his right hand above his head as if about to deliver a blow somewhere, "I saw the man I was telling you about heating one of the iron rods of my feed trough, and I heard him say to the child in his lap: 'You hate the sight of me, do you? Well, d—n you, after this you won't have a sight of me.'"

Gentlemen, what do you think this infernal wretch was going to do?" Vanderlyn was trembling all over. "He was going to burn this baby's eyes out. He said so, and he intended to do it. He grabbed the child by the back of the neck and seized the red-hot iron, but by the time he got it out of the fire I had clutched him."

"What did you do?" asked Padgett, smiling a little.

"I choked him down," replied Vanderlyn, his voice trembling with suppressed passion, "and rubbed that red-hot iron across his forehead until I could hear the flesh fry, and then I drove off and left him."

During this recital Jim Ashfield had turned to look at the witness, who was thrilling the courthouse with his recital; and judge, jury, and spectators noticed the flaming red scar that seemed burned into his forehead. There was considerable excitement in the room, but it failed to reach Padgett. To all appearances he was as calm and serene as ever. He seemed to the older lawyers, who were used to such things, to be calculating the effect this dramatic testimony would have upon the jury. He resumed the examination.

"So far, so good, Mr. Vanderlyn. But what became of the child?"

## XXVII

"What became of the child?" pursued Padgett, as Vanderlyn paused and looked around on the audience as if in search of sympathy. Padgett still regarded the passing clouds curiously, and the crowd in the court room waited breathlessly for the culmination.

"It was a very little child," said Vanderlyn, smiling a little, as though ashamed to confess how tenderly he treasured the memory of the baby he had rescued. "Why, gentlemen," turning to the jury in a deprecating way, "it was the smallest baby you most ever saw, and then—well, I declare to you, gentlemen, it was so thin that its eyes looked to be twice their natural size. It appeared to be always expecting somebody. When the wind blew through the trees, the child would come closer to me; and if one of the horses whickered, it would cry and hold out its hands for me to take it. It was a wonderful baby, gentlemen," pausing and smiling as if somewhat embarrassed. "He was a

good deal of trouble at first; but after awhile he wasn't any trouble at all, and it wasn't many weeks before he got to be the cutest young one you ever saw. He got fat by inches, and then he kept getting fatter and fatter, until he came to be the rosiest baby that ever traveled. His eyes got bright, and his hair got curly, and the women folks along the road used to snatch him up and kiss him until he'd be mad, and then they'd snatch him up and kiss him until they'd get him in a good humor. And it didn't take much," the great giant of a man continued, laughing to himself, "to get him in a good humor. You'd have to go a day's journey, gentlemen, before you'd find as lively a chap as that baby was."

"Mr. Vanderlyn," said Padgett, his cool, unsympathetic voice jarring upon everybody except the Judge and lawyers, "you are not exactly answering my question. What became of this wonderful baby?"

"That child, gentlemen," continued Vanderlyn, ignoring Padgett altogether and addressing himself to the jury, "that child traveled with me in that wagon for months and months. He was the only company I had, and by and by he got to be so much company that I couldn't get on well without him. When I made a trade with a man, Jack always put his lip in, and he had the last word in spite of all I could do."

"What did you say his name was?" asked Padgett, brushing an imaginary speck of dust from the lapel of his coat.

"Jack."

"An excellent name, Mr. Vanderlyn. I will try to remember it. Go on with your story."

"When it got cold," continued Vanderlyn in an argumentative way, "that boy would scrouge up to me under the blankets, and when it got hot he would kick like a Kentucky mule. I was always in luck when that boy was in the wagon. I never made a bad trade, and I never got worsted in a bargain. Somehow the people seemed to say to themselves: 'Well, old man, we won't take advantage of a fellow that's got a boy like that.' And they didn't. We made money, Jack and me; and we traveled up and down the country until everybody knew us, and it was 'Jack and Dan' from North Carolina to the Mississippi River."

"Do gunmakers peddle tobacco often and with as much success?" interrupted Padgett.

"Not that I know of," replied the other. "There were none of them peddling along with me."

The fair Katherine Underwood wanted to applaud, but propriety restrained her. Padgett still gazed at the curd-like clouds that deployed past the window.

"Once more, Mr. Vanderlyn," he asked, toying carelessly with the leaves of an open book, "what became of the child?"

"I kept him," replied the other promptly, his mind diverted from the story he was telling.

"You kept him?"

"Yes, sir. From that day to this he hasn't been out of my sight long at a time."

"Does your son know of this?" asked Padgett.

"What son?"

"Why, Jack Vanderlyn."

"I haven't got any son," said Vanderlyn, stammering a little. "Jack is the baby I was telling you about."

"That will do," said Padgett. Then, turning to Emory Reed: "The witness is with you."

But Emory Reed had no cross-examination to make. He had consulted frequently with Jim Ashfield, but that worthy was sullen and defiant.

"May it please the court," said young Reed, rising, "I have no questions to ask the witness."

"Have you any other witnesses?" asked the Judge, who, having forgotten to fan himself during the examination of Vanderlyn, seemed to be anxious to make up for lost opportunities.

"One more, your honor," said Padgett. "Mr. Sheriff, call 'Cindy Ashfield.'"

Whereupon Colonel Pitts, the sheriff, marched to the door with a consequential air and, calling the name of 'Cindy Ashfield, gave his stentorian voice to the winds. He did not have occasion to repeat the call. Appearing suddenly in the midst of the throng, as though she had dropped from the skies, 'Cindy Ashfield, with her bonnet in her hand, advanced to the witness stand. A more forlorn-looking object it would be impossible to conceive than this tall, pale

woman, who, looking neither to the right nor to the left, elbowed her way through the crowded corridor and passed slowly down the aisles. There was a little thrill of pity among the men and a feeling of mingled curiosity and shame among the women as she appeared. She stood before that large multitude with the air of simplicity common to those whose self-consciousness either suffering or experience has annihilated. Somehow it seemed that in touching hands with sorrow she had received the inheritance of indifference. It was observed that she did not once glance in the direction of her brother; nor did he, save for one brief moment, turn his eyes upon her. To all appearance, he grew more morose. Some say that he grew a shade paler; but that is mere tradition, the statement of those who, like Miss Victoria Sparks, saw a sensation in every sunbeam. My opinion, based upon the recollection of some of the members of the Rockville bar who were present, is that Ashfield paid as little attention to his sister on the witness stand as he did when she was in her cabin cooking his scanty meals. Whether he had faith in her devotion or contempt for her testimony or was utterly careless as to the result will never be known, but it is certain that he betrayed no unusual emotion when she made her appearance.

But a great change came over Padgett. He no longer looked at the clouds. His superciliousness disappeared. He turned to the woman with a smile, provided her with a chair, handed her a fan, gave her a glass of water, and said something to her that brought a smile to the sad face. It was observed, moreover, that in conducting the examination every word, tone, and gesture was calculated to subtract something from the embarrassment she might naturally feel under the circumstances.

The witness was sworn. Meanwhile Padgett appeared to be absorbed in the contents of a little slip of paper which he had found in his vest pocket. Having apparently mastered its contents, he rolled it into a little ball, glanced at it vaguely, and began the examination.

"Cindy," said he as friendly and as familiarly as if he had been seated at her own fireside, "do you know a man named Vanderlyn?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you see him now? Look around."

"Yes, sir. That's him," pointing in the direction of the witness who had just taken his seat.

"'Cindy," said Padgett, somewhat apologetically, "we will have to go over a good deal of ground together, you and me. Do you remember when your brother stole Judge Walthall's baby?"

The woman brushed a crisp of the gray hair, that had fluttered down into her face, impatiently away. "I do, sir."

"Do you remember any of the circumstances, 'Cindy? The jury would like to have them. It was a very small child, I am told."

"Yes, sir; mighty small."

"Did you ever have a little child?"

#### XXVIII

The woman looked around the crowded court room as if in search of some avenue of escape. Then her eyes sought the floor, and she began to tie and untie a never-ending knot in her bonnet strings in a nervous and embarrassed way. Padgett did not hurry her. On the contrary, he did not seem at all interested in her reply. While she stood hesitating and confused, he sauntered toward the bench and said something to the Judge which caused that functionary to frown and nod his head in a manner surprisingly emphatic, and it was noted by those who had a knack of observing small things that the fan which dropped from the Judge's hand when the young counselor attracted his attention was not afterwards resumed during the proceedings. Returning where he could face the window and the witness, Padgett repeated his question as though it had occurred to him for the first time.

"'Cindy," he asked, "did you ever have a little child?"

"Yes, sir," cried the woman, weeping as if her heart would break.

He waited a little until she was calmer and then continued: "If it is not too much trouble to you, 'Cindy, I would be glad to have you tell the court and the jury about your little baby. I want you to tell it in your own way."

There was a deep hush upon the audience. Judge Walthall, who was sitting within the bar, by holding his chair



sheer above his head moved nearer to the witness, and those who could hitched up their chairs a trifle closer. The witness appeared to be much embarrassed. She picked nervously at her bonnet strings and more than once brushed imaginary hairs from before her eyes.

"Well, sir," she said finally, "I did have a little baby. It was born mine, and it stayed mine." She paused again as if carefully surveying the ground she was going over.

"What became of the child, 'Cindy?" asked Padgett gently.

"It died," she replied gently.

The young lawyer turned once more toward the window and scanned the clouds and the sky as though they contained the solution of the problem that was vexing his soul. "You say you remember when Jim stole Judge Walthall's child?" he asked presently.

"Yes, sir, as well as if it was yistiddy."

"What did your brother do with the stolen child?"

"I dunno, sir. I never seen it."

Judge Walthall rose in his place, pale and trembling, and stood there during the remainder of the examination.

"You say you never saw Judge Walthall's child?"

"No, sir."

"Well, the understanding was that Jim left the child in your charge and that you restored it."

The woman drew herself up a little, her eyes blazing like coals of fire, and said: "It was a lie."

"That was my opinion," replied Padgett. "Well, now, 'Cindy, you must tell us about it," he continued. "We want to know the truth of this."

Somehow the woman, remembering the great sacrifice she had made for her vagabond brother, forgot her embarrassment. The long-subdued passion of her nature flared up and carried everything before it. Upon the stage she would have been regarded by the critics as the very queen of tragedy; but standing where she was, the majority of the multitude that hemmed her in looked upon her as an interesting but very commonplace witness.

"What must I tell you, Mr. Padgett?"

"I want you to tell me about your little baby, 'Cindy," the young lawyer said gently.

"I did have a baby," she said fiercely, "an' Jim there knows it. He came to me, gentlemen"—and turning suddenly to the jury—"an' he took my baby an' give it to Judge Walthall. He said the people would kill him ef he didn't, an' I knowed they would."

At this point Judge Walthall exclaimed: "May it please the court," he said, "this is most extraordinary. I desire"—

"Your honor," said Padgett, "it is our desire that the witness not be interrupted. It is not our purpose to have any confusion. The story this witness has to tell may be of peculiar and absorbing interest to Judge Walthall, but the State is searching for a basis for justice. Your honor will perceive at once how injudicious it would be to interrupt the witness."

"The court," said Judge Vardeman sternly, "will have no interruptions from any source. Mr. Sheriff, you will preserve order."

Whereupon Sheriff Pitts and his chosen bailiffs rapped upon the floor with their staffs; and Judge Walthall, with an appealing look at the witness, refrained from further questioning.

"'Cindy,'" said Padgett, "the jury are acquainted with the main facts in regard to the kidnaping of Judge Walthall's child. What we desire to know is this: Did your brother place that child in your charge?"

"No, sir."

"Did you ever see the child after it was stolen?"

"No, sir."

"The child, then, that your brother restored to Judge Walthall was yours?"

"Yes, sir."

There was considerable sensation in the court room as the witness, in her blunt and dramatic manner, made this reply, and Judge Walthall once more made an attempt to say something. It was an ineffectual one, however. Sheriff Pitts and his able coadjutors, by making more noise than the crowd, succeeded in keeping down a disturbance. When everything was quiet, Padgett continued.

"You say your child died, 'Cindy?'"

"Yes, sir."

"Where did it die?"

"At Judge Walthall's house."

"Then the child he thought was his was yours?"

"Yes, sir."

"That will do. The witness is with the other side."

But in the midst of the confusion that ensued the other side was not heard; and 'Cindy Ashfield stepped down from the stand and was immediately surrounded by an eager crowd, prominent among whom was Judge Walthall. After this there was a recess of the court, and when it reassembled Vanderlyn was recalled.

"Mr. Vanderlyn," said Padgett, "do you know Judge Walthall?"

"Yes."

"Where did you know him?"

"In Rockville."

"Where else did you know him?"

"In Virginia."

"Did you know his brother?"

"Yes."

There was a pause, during which Padgett consulted with the Judge. Finally he said, turning to the witness: "What is your name?"

"If the court please," said Vanderlyn, "this is not to the purpose. It has no bearing whatever upon the case under consideration."

Padgett smiled, but said nothing.

"The witness must answer the question," said the court emphatically.

Vanderlyn hesitated, and Padgett repeated the question.

"What is your name?"

"Calhoun Walthall." The crowd seemed stunned by the reply and sat breathless.

"You are Judge Walthall's brother?" the young lawyer inquired.

"Yes," replied Vanderlyn, "and Jack is his son."

With that there was a shout in the court room that the bailiff could not control; and Judge Walthall, the tears streaming down his face, made his way to the witness stand and placed his trembling hand in the firm grasp of his brother.

XXIX<sup>1</sup>

And this was the romance of Rockville! To most of the people it seemed more like a dream than a romance, and Jack was the only one who seemed to protest against it. When the facts were made known to him, he went into a wild fit of weeping and refused to be comforted.

"I don't want anybody but Dan," he cried convulsively. "If Dan ain't mine, then I don't want anybody."

Vanderlyn himself seemed to be unusually cheerful. He was exceedingly loquacious and seemed to drop back into his old eccentricities of speech and manner.

"I'll tell you what, Jack," he said in reply to the tearful complaints of the boy, "we'll have lots of fun together yet. I'm your uncle, you know."

"I don't want no uncle," the boy cried. "I don't want anybody but you."

"Well, you have had me a long time, Jack; you must remember that. You never had a better uncle than I'll be, old man."

"I tell you, you ain't my uncle, and I won't have it so. I want you to be what you always was."

"I was always your uncle, Jack," said the other cheerily. "You can be anything you want to."

"Then you must go away," said the boy petulantly. "I can be my own uncle."

"That you can, Jack," said the other cheerily. "You can be anything you want to."

Thus these two quarreled until the mother put in an appearance.

"My darling," she said, "you must go with me."

Still weeping, the boy flung himself in her arms, and the

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<sup>1</sup>"Owing to the fact that the compiler of the serial known as 'The Romance of Rockville' was unavoidably absent during the greater part of last week, engaged in reporting the romance of Barnesville, the concluding (!) installment is postponed to next week. The author fondly hopes that this intermission will prove a pleasant relaxation to the already overstrained minds of the readers of the *weekly Constitution*."—*Weekly Constitution*, September 17, 1878, editorial column.

trouble was over. With one word she had conquered the child.

Thus it was that Rockville had its romance, though to some of the principal actors it appeared to be a dream. Thus it was with Tiny Padgett. He sat upon the wooden bench opposite Miss Jane Perryman's cottage night after night and, smoking his fragrant cigars, wondered if he had not been asleep. He had cut loose from his old companions and was no longer the central figure of the small carousals that were of nightly occurrence in Rockville. He was not the same. Reserve seemed to have taken possession of him, and quiet claimed him for her own. Not a night passed that he did not sit and smoke upon the old wooden bench in front of Vanderlyn's shop and opposite Miss Perryman's. He seemed to be happier there than anywhere else. He seemed to enjoy the quiet that fell upon that particular portion of the little town. He sat there night after night; and passers-by, early or late, grew familiar with the small, slight figure partially concealed by the deep shadows of night. They came to know him by the bright red spark that shone from his cigar, and nearly all who passed that way flung him some sort of salutation.

One memorable night, not long after the trial, he sat in his accustomed place smoking and thinking—always thinking. It was an Indian summer night. The breeze that rustled in and out the chinaberry trees was as balmy as that of spring, and in the far fields of heaven the stars bloomed as fair and as beautiful as if the earth beneath them were not full of misery, trouble, and despair. The dying summer filled the air with the fragrance of a new life, and nature seemed to be upon the verge of renewing her youth. Marking these things in a vague, careless way, Padgett heard the sound of voices, and presently he saw a man and a woman walking down the street toward him. It was Vanderlyn and the schoolmistress. They walked slowly, as if by that means they would prolong the present and enjoy it.

"It is all so new and strange," the schoolmistress was saying when the two came within hearing, "that I cannot understand it."

Vanderlyn laughed. "Everything must be new and

strange at some time or other," he said, and then added quickly, "except love. It is always old."

"O no," she replied; "it is new to me, and I think it would be new to Mr. Padgett."

"New to Padgett! It is older with him than with any of us. He was cut out for a hero," Vanderlyn continued warmly.

The twain passed on; and Padgett, catching a glimpse of their happiness even in the dark, smiled and sighed. They were his friends. They passed on and out of sight. Presently the door of Miss Jane's little cottage opened, and out came Nora and the schoolmaster. They said nothing, but went quietly down the street. The young lawyer, gazing after them, knew what the result would be.

"Happiness is abroad to-night," he said, laughing lightly, "but she goes in another direction. It is better so. She would find in me an entire stranger. I should be restive under the restraints of content."

Once more the voices broke in upon his meditations. Vanderlyn and the schoolmistress came slowly back.

"Then you are not going away?" The voice was the voice of Kate Underwood, and the reply came from Vanderlyn.

"How can I when I have so much to live for here?"

They passed on and disappeared, and another couple took their places. Padgett would have known Nora's laugh among a thousand. He knew, too, its import. He knew that the schoolmaster had conquered. They came up the street hand in hand, the one serious and thoughtful and the other intoxicated with happiness. They passed into the yard, and the door of the cottage closed upon them. Tiny, watching the stars, wafted them a blessing. Finally he flung away his cigar. It fell in the sand and shone for a moment a bright and burning spark. Then it began to fade, and its color mingled with the dust by which it was surrounded. Padgett arose, flung a kiss toward Nora's window, and walked slowly down the street. Days afterwards a hunting party, camping upon the banks of the Oconee, found a bundle of clothing that they knew belonged to the young lawyer, and pinned to it was a card bearing this inscription: "THIS IS THE END."

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Whitcomb Riley by Stevenson, of Atlanta, both of which may be seen in the Atlanta Carnegie Library, and a portrait made by Frances Benjamin Johnston in 1906, of which Mr. Harris wrote to Miss Johnston: "I have now found out for the first time what you meant by the twinkle. The twinkle seems to be me myself, after all, and I have been going on all these years not knowing what was missing from the photographs I had taken by people who knew nothing about the twinkle." This last portrait, along with a series of others, is reproduced in the souvenir pamphlet issued by the Uncle Remus Memorial Association.

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